

Fall 1975

## The Day Before the Rains and Then Some

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**THE DAY BEFORE THE RAINS  
AND THEN SOME**

We wake.

Twelve hours later  
the sky still looks the same,  
only now  
it's turned backwards,  
over-exposed and red,  
the sun  
like a burned hand  
dipped into its back pocket  
looking for a billfold—

Tomorrow,  
it will rain as predicted.

It is already raining  
on towns  
with strange names  
hundreds of miles  
to the west.  
The rain is as delicate  
as deer's breath  
or it approaches in warm folds  
like the scarves  
of daughters  
we have not fathered. . .

Everything in this life  
becomes a search for milk.

The moon spreads gauze sheets  
on windows closed  
for evening  
and steam lifts  
from pavement  
we have never seen,  
like the loose sleeves  
of Chinese dancers:

We know the chimneys  
will collapse;  
the undercover police  
will toss off their disguises;  
a plane will drop  
into the lecture-hall  
after brilliant maneuvers—

And rain ten days straight  
must quit:

We have been sleeping on our hands.  
We are closer  
than we think,  
closer than we would like to be,  
without knowing,  
where things seem to work  
because of our ignorance,  
like a slide  
we have held up  
to the light for a moment,  
and seen through. . .