

Fall 1980

Two Aubades: November

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TWO AUBADES: NOVEMBER

I.

Six times last night I woke, your arm
Across my back like a bar of sunlight
Warming a stone sill. Now when my body's stiff
From sleep and the cold drafts of my dreams,
Your hand rubs circles down my skin,
Melting the block of pain between my shoulders.
A warm blade, stroked on ice, sinks,
Opening it to sun and a slow melting.
Under your hands, my stiff skin loosens,
Muscles thaw; I am flesh again

II.

Dawn, gray as the backs of stones,
Flattens what remains—four papery
Gold leaves flapping on the aspen.
Light grates at our eyes; geese cut the sky
Wedge in lines straight as hemlocks,
Then waver in the wind like smoke.
Bark and log split under axe and wedge;
Heartwood opens to the fire.
The geese, escaping winter, cut clouds,
Split earth's gray wrapping to let the pale sun
Flood our chilling skin.