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On Hearing Harkeness Tower

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ON HEARING HARKENESS TOWER

When you asked
I couldn't say
something beautiful.
Beauty requires distance

like the scent
of the ground in noon-light,
spirits letting go
from the cold.

It is also the scent
of a childhood museum,
the mineral room
or the room of dinosaurs

that have turned into minerals.
The world has a beautiful sound
as in the air above
a small industrial city

with a college.
Its bells carry
over walks and piles
of shoveled crystal.

For me, there are two places
that for a moment
come together,
the one from childhood

that is lost
and the one that goes unnoticed
since the present
has no meaning.

I can say the body
has two surfaces,
the one that listens for flattery
and the other

even words cannot go
deep enough to touch.
When it gets dark,
the ground freezes again.

The city has had
its momentary thaw.
There's always a bell
that our bodies

listen to in sleep.
It makes its own kind of love,
its sweet talk
in the stillest hours.