

# CutBank

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## Civil Service

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CIVIL SERVICE

When I can't sleep I go to the post office hours  
before dawn and sit in its Federalist lobby to listen  
to the postmistress banging, banging the armored

post office box doors one after another shut.  
It's like a whole town of sixteen  
year old girls leaving home in a series block after

block after block. The doors bang, their glass rattles. I'm  
sunk in a war surplus folding chair dying  
for a Chesterfield. I can feel it in my breast pocket. Bang.

The letters rest in state, unopened. When the cleaning crew  
arrives with its bleach and polish I take my quiet  
leave. I light up outside as the glass door whispers

CLOSED. The light starts—hut,  
hut—to turn the stars out.