I Didn't Do It

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All I love now, finally, is the sound of concrete still mixing at red lights as the truck revs in gear on the hill to stand still, the clicking of gallons and dollars and cents at the pumps, a hand drill whose noise cringes in pine and spins wildly when through, the weak give of the rain-sagged, haphazard plywood that covers the slip in the earth dug for further wires, the pit I look to, its mud floor beyond even the pleasure of the heated machines frantic in motion: there is a world made of earth and nothing else—no heart, no thought, no sense, no wonder.

I just stand there rescued nearly to sleep with machine grease, becalmed by mechanical church chimes, sent away from myself with the memory of cash registers’ tumbling, voided numbers, let alone where I shouldn’t want to belong.

But in the distant sound of a bus braking to stop I imagine the exhaust of blow dryers and then fleeing hair, and find, even in all these engines and motors, something as simple and unwanted as your face looking into a mirror,
and your body weighing in naked on the scale, the whole back of you looking toward me, then your voice slicing out through showers, your hair snarled up in a spat.

I try not to feel anything nearly, my mind hurried toward the earth sides I see dug away, the moisture along the walls laced with white cable, and at the bottom a heads-up watch someone lost, or tossed there to change luck, or just trashed. Is it a woman’s watch or a child’s Disney watch with pleasing animals in it?—it’s something thin from this height—and I think of jumping down into its face with my boot heels, grinding its gears to a halt. I think of its delicate hands pointlessly circling inside the circle of glass, how I’d like to ruin their day, stop whatever silicon chip inhabits it.