

John Hart

Vlado Daydreams about a Woman after She's Been Shot

As though love were just an instant
in Sarajevo, I witness
unspeakable crimes weep from the shade.

In my daydream by the window,
we take a train north to Ljubljana.
The walls of my house pop

like a water balloon. Everywhere,
I'll love you, spread every clenched limb.
Forget Bosnia, the great ghost growling

for its sausage and call
when you get home to let me know
how long I have left in this dank room.

This is how things are, an ancient concern
with modern weapons. I doubt I have long.
The flowers of the wallpaper wilt.

Poor girl, I hope someone spends the next hundred years
washing his hands of this. But I hope no one saw
you filling a bucket at the drain spout.

I want that one for myself—
the moment the bullet still ripped
only the air and we knew nothing

of its existence. My wife hides
under the kitchen counter. The blasts are closer.
An empty basin shatters on the floor.