

Benjamin Evans

Stay Illusion

— *written at my father's side*

On the balcony, in the trick box of your illness,
blades of cornsilk light slide barely past our loss-
tensed limbs. No grand magician grins, it's just
geometry's deadpan of angles and facets; circles
heaven-clipped and leveled at elsewheres we can
nearly touch. In sham cuffs still these wrists are bound.
But we have mugs of black Sumatra and the birds—
their gold effusions maypoling the kousa dogwood
and its vanilla shelves of bloom. Should we count
this then a coin feinted from the stern sky's ear,
a pearl stalled and gleaming on the abacus of being?
These finches can't unstitch your sickness,
the sun-chromed spruce's needles cannot pick
the locks. In air so thin with vanishing
how do we breathe; pull the rainbow silk
of love beyond our gritted teeth?

