

ABSENCE

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To forget means “done,” means *fin*, means *sans* equals *avec*,
and the tender things said are the primitive languages lost.
And the bleached bone is the snow that is the granite of the mountain.

It is all the same now. Now, the hours thronged in delirious light
match the dark crevice of a secret place still demanding search.
And when searched, the hours drop like skin from tasteless fruit.

And the freeing height of buildings speak of depth as the scarred slopes
of this terrain do. And your mouth, your mouth resembles the sealed portal
to the garden, and your body, the strained wheel of the pioneer’s wagon.

So let it be this way, the seasons, the shapes, *je me souviens* and *le souvenir*—
we ourselves are absent, only the words make any difference.