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Poem Ending on a Line of Celan

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For whom a prayer became matter, ash.

Not ash, but its tangled undercity.

If one’s prayer is not unanswered, but refuted by the same god,

god becomes a sum of numbers, 
a phrase rendered in the surviving language. The living

do what they do: talk and forget, as if both happen in deference to the other.

Celan, giver of falsities, does prayer reach us through language only to reflect not up but back into our mouths?

Is there no word which does not swim in memory, does not corrupt every good silence? That same problem of understanding —

For whom a prayer became an undone street, destroyed address:

‘o none, o no-one, o you’