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On the Thing

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DONALD BERGER

On the Thing

Can you expect special things to happen when you
Know that nothing great has ever happened before?
You can expect special things to happen, you can have
Breathing room, and wine, at no one else's expense.

The road to the back of the room, where all the laughter
Is, seems so wide, I do not have to tell you how even
Wider it will become. So if you're not tired, people can
Go there, and ask for a drink and enjoy whatever life

Without pretending. I've seen it, I saw it myself. The
Rays were those of electric lights but such a poverty
Went, and still goes, unnoticed. When I looked up,
It was three in the morning, a huge crowd of different

Colors was gathering. It was interesting, and people
Spoke to you face-to-face whether you wanted them
To or not. I remember feeling pickled with all kinds
Of feeling for it, in the back room, on the small street,

Wherever. Can you imagine looking at it for fourteen
Straight hours and never forgetting what you had to go
Back to? But it wasn't dangerous, so unlike sugar or
Tobacco or meat it wasn't funny. Fourteen times in

Six days I was forced to write to them about it, on bland
Postcards with pictures of grass on them, or maybe
A flower. By the grace of god it seemed not to punish
Anything for being there without listing, shoving. One

Guy tried to sell me a knife, and another offered to buy
It back from me, after I bought it. The moon had an un-
Documented shape to it. It was lathered. Steam tried
Reaching up to it, refusing to hide its hands. Soon we

Got tired of wishing for things, and didn't love it, refusing
Even this last want, for someone to drive up and say we
Didn't have to do anything anymore, and that the place
Looked good, spreading itself out under us or above us.