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MARK HALPERIN

The Trouble with Spring

The warmth is welcome, the green seeping into
stems, chickadees drilling the air
with their staccato nonsense. There's no harm
in any of that. Even the gnats, like pepper
on the wall, are only annoying. But the lack of blue

sky, the pall of clouds, that constant lead-
gray above, sloping my shoulders, the weight of time
bending and pulling, oppress me. It's all in your head,
you say, but if so, the shadows inside are still outside
like a burden, and intolerable—no breaking free

of the self, no integrity to subject
object distinctions. Thank God spring's not stubborn,
even if that requires the same of fall.
I reject sameness, blurred edges. Let other people
and clear skies flourish, worlds beside our own

for escaping to and through: windows, back doors.
Maybe spring's not so bad, and anticipation
is a kind of heightening delay to be pleased
by when it ends abruptly as with a gun
shot—which is not to say I want more.