Or How about If I Put It This Way

Denis Johnson
OR HOW ABOUT IF I PUT IT THIS WAY

All winter it's
winter, which
is only reasonable,
and then suddenly exactly
like summer outside, which really isn't
quite you know . . .
This is the day
that is strange when one longs
for the correct number
and the exact, exact address—
day you see clearly the awful
details on the faces of salesgirls.

For me—I wish I could enter the ash
that rests on every tongue,
and the silence
so fine inside that ash,
and never have to walk
again through the night
of the first day of spring
down a long residential street of great trees
and houses in which the people do not feel compelled
to explain themselves to the air,
explaining myself to the air.

"THIS IS THURSDAY. YOUR EXAM WAS TUESDAY."

It is a fine, beautiful
and lovely time of warm dusk,
having perhaps just a touch
too much

enveloping damp;
but nice, with its idle strollers,
of whom I am one,
and it's true,
their capacity for good

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