

THE ASTRONOMER AND THE POET

We are so brief. I realize
as the astronomer tells me
how time is ticked off against
the body; how many hands are you?
How many hands the sky? Place
a grain of sand at a field goal, he says,
then an orange at the other end—I weigh
the idea, the metaphor of sand and orange,
the inexplicable in the grit.

Light is the limit. What is age if everything
in your body is the fusilade from a falling out
between the sky and itself?

We nitpick with the metaphors : imperfections.
Both are fine veins through the skin of our perspective
of the immeasurable : the dimensions of distance :
maybe language can only tell you
what another thing can be like, under certain
circumstances. Perhaps what you know of words,
he says, will not fail you. But first we must.
We both know something about intentional failures.

I think of my body. How it is constellated : a mythology :
a mapping. And I don't mean to, but I cannot help
pinning myself against the radiant dark. Cannot help
but to question where the idea of me stops or begins.

We are alike. The astronomer and I can only create
a metaphor for these things, we have no interest in
and no ability to experiment in the ether, we both
may only watch, and wait, and be ready with more
watching, for the light to reach what we do not know.
We both scratch at an ash thick myth—big and black,
and pray, an explosion.