FROM THE HYMNAL


not just Sisters and Cenobites rejoicing. Joy is brazen:

noise celebrates the streets, the flow of cars and mustard bus, the rut and peak of joyous noise, the flow of sinners coming, stop and go, the blink-blink lights, red-eye then green hazel, amber, lemon yellow in-between grey stacks of blocks with marbled floors, grey swirls, grey shimmies smoke, the top of stacks rub stomachs with the turquoise sky embracing them—grey rising risen echoing a multitudinous din—some voices full of joy now still reek—when they are close—of gin. And out and in and on and so, the changing eyes, the furry traffic flows. Horns and honks and birdsong underneath the sunshine yellow bus parade of progress and decline—and what is theirs and mine—the coming slowly, rising, cresting then decline of no, not only sweetness—yes, yes, of course, the madness, perverts, dirt-nailed empty palms, the loneliness, all the ids and ides and rusted suicides—then, still. Still, will does not entirely decline, can’t rest—

Not only Sisters and Cenobites rejoice. Joy is brazen,

will try again—model wings to try to fly from bottle tops, rejection slips, sentence served and prizes missed and lips unkissed, lips departed, these lips part to whistle hum in the gristy after-math of their turn not yet come, and blow sound round mouths pursed
lips in hope of freedom won, model wings of broken things, this
that scrimped scrap and pervasive hope, hip hope, the noise of joy
escapes the lips: climbs with grey the turquoise realm, joy reclaims
the face the hips, joy the noise the Broadway hit rising from a gritty
infinite of intersections met at many corners with rejection—

Never mind, our Joy replies (the noise inside, swelled gourd of
notes, sitar’s taut plucked strings, implies a resurrection);

not empty halls, not spotless halls, not halls at all, not unlike nuns
or monks, our need, in wordless overflowing.