

## Slow Train, Suite For The Anatomy

Two hours' worth of rail  
and muffled rant, New York to Trenton  
on the slow train. Weather, thin, one way.  
One thick landscape that wants repainting.  
Miles the same finger-weed and backsides  
of factories that strike like the cant "the back  
of my hand is what you'll get." *The back  
of my hand, the back of my hand*, the train  
flat-wheels it through the dumb  
anatomy of pipe and strut, girder and plank,  
through the stumps of street, the terse boroughs  
of slash, duct, cinder block and cinder . . .

This is what you're coming to.  
This terrible skull of the mother,  
her hair knotted and glued  
from the electrodes. You're stone  
behind her, seated, basin between your knees  
and her head in your hands.  
With water, blood temperature, and soap,  
you spill yourself in her hair.  
With each whorl and ridge of fingertip  
you rub her lumps and filaments,  
gentle around the temples.  
You're left with two pink hands,  
a head between your thighs—  
the inverse of birth.

The ride back's a palindrome  
of street signs and broadsides on brick.  
You want to stop here and write  
the worst curses on these slate-colored clouds.  
You don't. You go on, north, up the line  
to where it gradually cools and knots.