

## Extracts: For Celine

"In one dream, I have only to throw a twig to kill you. Fallen, you arise as a winged shade keening through Europe, through a lengthening succession of rooms and fields I want to save, that you burn." To some things, neither a lament

nor any compensation matters. Years succeed each other as a column of bound men. To some things, the unloving preserve of common nightmare is safe haven, is past loss. I think of rooms and fields dressed out

in that complete responsiveness I need to expect from places. They are all afire now. They diminish, drawing themselves down into a dark core I cannot enter. They are beyond responding, an old world, the next.

And so hating all of it is not completely senseless perhaps, if only as a way of carrying off one livid feeling into exile. Hating the faithlessness of anything that goes on, you can hope

for what has to happen anyway: the torches, the cries in the streets and on the country roads. "In this dream, the sky is falling into pieces. In the confusion, I can hear a voice as flat as a travelogue's. It narrates, moving

calmly from scene to scene as though the end of everything were a routine kindness, part of a more intricate or grander gesture."

There are some things I cannot hope for. There are other responses, other compensations.