

Jay Rogoff

Valedictorian

We all broke out, all ached, but I remember
the senior prom, his geometric pace
around and around the gym floor, his eyes
unswerving from its painted black perimeter.
If I made up a name like Samson Gruber —
but Christ, I can't: it's too ridiculous.
Inside a head mopped with a blond thunder-
storm, lightning danced, blazing with calculus,
waltzing him into a world of forms. Princeton
opened opulent arms to him that fall;
he scaled the summit, clambering to the top
of the math building. One calculated step
perfect as a pinpoint, and he danced on
air, breathless and beloved as an angel.