## Between Old English betweenum / Archaic betwixt

across the space separatinga line connectsto simple words of a transient typeI am losingthe language to explainwhy I am overwhelmedby the need for humanityand so much reckoningcannot speakof the truths I wish to speakwhen world is concealedin the body of a man

I ask my body if I am immaterial but my body no longer recognises this as self to be filled by the taste of discord devotion and desire the product of a common action in the mouth and in the throat not distinct but briefly true for all time.

#### Red

skies above head expand compress blown hot to glass invincible most things moving remain untouchable sliding sweat

> dancing horses made bloody orange suppressing time absorbing time flowing in

> > flowing out

of body

separate combined

similar opposite

knowledge a state found sloughing off skin

plausible to diverge in heat

bounded by nothing

### Laocoön in the Vatican

Human agony has no redemptive power, there is no reward. It is a votive offering, concerned with anatomy rather than technique. And he is only an athlete, in motion everywhere, the panic made to fit each muscle, each band of tissue; tension and compression mathematically modelled to resist the contrapposto even as the serpent coils around each child. Chest curving towards his gods, he speaks of what lies beneath devotion, where wrestler is the same as family. But in the end, he is a man petrified and without skin, makes of his body nothing in the fight, except its own peculiar purpose.

### Breath as needed

She sleeps on sober ground, insistent and in a continuous line. Shrouded by the island's shifting tones she is heedless of following the dead.

A natural reaction to the body's efforts, she holds the air taken, arms above head remembering his rhythm was abrupt. Were she more resistant, who knows.

Nobody knows where he came from Nobody knows who his father is Nobody knows she was carried here Nobody abandoned on this rock

with all his promises. Lift this rock, take your sword and sandals, love.

# from CAMERA OBSCURA

### **Icebergs in Ilulissat**

In Disko Bay the growlers and the bergy bits crack their knuckles, assemble for the birth. It takes a musician's ear to separate the pattern – the falling notes from the echoes and returns passed on by the underside of waves. Not random but arrhythmic, a natural if not melodic measure. We call this an adventure, a reason to travel but remain as abstract as the lines of saturated blues and bone-dry whites, drifting together and apart.

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# this Polar Night

the skies drop anchor slam a door –

I roll and list weightless in my glass jar

game for nocturnal oracles and falling stars.

My head on the bag of feathers throbbing with gut noise

swells the hurting bass strings

score two heartbeats, tactus and ictus

forcing an exit. Thin pulse, transparent

white, an image of new life revealing the spoils.