

it only felt like another life ago i'm certain  
and time has made no harsh breaks with its own beginnings  
because consistency is no hobgoblin  
but the very stuff of which our living faith is made  
yet still and all  
the feeling will not leave me that this bland old fool was not  
could not have ever been  
born from that incendiary genius  
that downward crashing volcanic lava  
that moonlanding rockstar acidfreak red brigadier  
i remember in my fixed old pattern of recall

my best friend and most recent wife would tell me i am positive  
that some old men have photographed the sun of their youth  
with a yellow soft-focus lens  
and returned to the darkroom unhappy as they are  
with the razor edge reality of the black-and-whites of their Ansel  
Adams days  
others she would say have moved on  
and now digitally enhance the image of those days  
replacing grays with color and noise with music  
not to say she would allow  
that any particular bland product of too much refining  
is guilty of the sin of carrying the truth so long in his tight fisted grip  
that it has worn smooth to fit the shape of his hand as polished as any  
mother of pearl

it cannot be i tell myself so much has changed  
yet still and all

she says to me that refining is what makes the polluted pure again  
and reminds me that the poor-shod runner never reaches her stride  
she says to me that boys bent on destruction  
frequently find it to our dismay  
and reminds me that soon our children will be arriving  
the grill needs lighting  
and someone with practiced hands must open the wine