

lockers filled with sweat stained clothes, wandering
into offices filled with stacks of unsigned papers,
calendars with meetings circled in red,
black telephones without dial tones.

You'd place the mouth piece against your lips.
Your voice would call out your wife's name,
maybe mine. How could I not have wanted this?

East Montana

Twenty miles outside of town Adam can't hear
the refrigerator's loud rattle, there's no hardware store
to walk the aisles holding a cracked sprinkler head. He drives north
up highway 21, past the cold sadness of failed towns. Adam understands the grey indifference of
factories, the grey-white smoke drifting from smokestacks.
He enters the safety of a cheap motel room--an ashtray on the nightstand,
a rectangle of fluorescent light from the bathroom. How many other anonymous bodies have slept
under these stained sheets? A man yells, a woman yells louder.
But none of it matters because tomorrow there's a different motel room,
takeout pizza, another man and woman in the room next door. Adam drifts
through the high plains, the rolling flatness. And what if she told him
there would be a child? What if she told him only a week before? None of it matters
in east Montana. Just roads where nothing
gets named, houses fall into ruin. Night brings cable television
with complimentary HBO. A free Styrofoam cup of coffee in the lobby.
He wanders the neon glow of a parking lot, 2:00 a.m.,
past a rusted car with Arizona plates, a pickup truck with a tarp covering
used furniture in the bed. The wind blows, a motel door slams
as Adam listens to eighteen wheelers rumble into darkness.
How could anyone--his Eve, *your* Eve--ever think different?