

THE USHER

I saw you wrap a cello  
and I swanned,  
took you from the back.

Rim-simple I ran my hand  
across the handles,  
across the frets.

What did you think a ghost  
was made of?  
Shadow stitches

to the floor its paper-waters.  
A storm is responsible  
for much of this — the living

running on chalk-feet,  
the clouds landing  
like a kind of mold.

And we're no better,  
just dust and rosin.  
So we must flee the pavilion,

And I'd carry you  
if not for your wheel-chair,  
lift your arm to point, if not

for the slip-shot spine.  
Wristbone, cornerbone —  
two brief meters of the fall.

Listen, when you hear me now  
it's just behind the ear, sliding  
through a puddle in the cross-walk,  
  
your thin shoulder rolling in my grip,  
  
your useless feet an inch above your shoes.