The only others in the rose garden are arguing about Blake, whatever slept in their heads struggling awake. The roses are anything but blasé yet they stay asleep, so few of them in November there seems an unlikely plentitude. No one will ever want to kiss me now, thinks the girl in the burn unit and No, no, shout the sleeping roses, some with thorns eyelash soft, others beetle cankered. Why aren’t we more terrified by sleep, of consciousness extinguished and no guarantee of return? Because of consciousness extinguished and no guarantee of return? The roses never wake either, they lie in plastic sleeves atop the coffin asleep, take their part in brazen backseat sex asleep, whatever secret whispered into their labia they’ll never repeat. And when they wither like fire made of water, you will wither too pestered by contradiction. A world so full of detail yet so vague, a spot of blood so red rubbed away.