

## CHRISTOPHER PHELPS

### Sound Belies

The stuttering toward,  
the frittering away.

The man beside me sleeping,  
breathing gently, by all appearances

resting in peace, a phrase  
I wish could be returned to the living.

There's time to worry about the rest,  
or else there isn't.

The carrying on, the cutting away.  
One way or another,

the souging wind around a tent,  
and miles astray, the sound of lint

not yet formed and husk  
not yet hardened.

The dross from truth to beauty,  
one way as a letter.

The sun somewhere,  
in and out, after and before,

an overthought,  
an underthought,

a body with its own  
problems and pressures,

own fissures of rest  
and restless motion.

One way as a letter at a time,  
that is, the car doors

closing somewhere else,  
the echo here unheard, except

in this winsome wind  
somehow to form

CHRISTOPHER PHELPS

the bearings of a storm,  
say reports, rumors,

narrators about as reliable  
as the several pack of boar

we startled across,  
just past sunset.

And sure we shouted,  
and sure they clod

their heavy hoofs away,  
and sure the gibbous moon

was hours from rising,  
and sure the air was

too still to be a comfort,  
and sure the stars

looked, as ever,  
in such a dark, implausible.