

undone

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Where was the painting actually? It was worrying. Up close it was this body of scars, gobbits, flickers, *accumulations*. She barely recognised it, and as to why? She had no answer, no idea why it should be like this. As she walked away, moving across the studio to her chair, the painting snapped into presenter mode again, pushing back into a third dimension and flashing its eternal magic act: the world, as a dream. The troubling body had been contained, and this was a comfort. But—it was still there.

She didn't know what to do, and sitting, considering, she realised Judith was on the radio: Let's face it. We're undone by each other. And if we're not, we're missing something. What or who was she facing? It seemed to come and go, an actor she was making, but who would one day snap shut and no longer permit her gobbits, flickers, *accumulations*. Flowing, not flowing; she'd read that forms of decay could be made to look beautiful if they were just painted right...If this seems so clearly the case with grief, it is only because it was already the case with desire...Close up is where the problem is, that's for sure. Maybe it's just her. She's made of ice cream, and the heating is on...One does not always stay intact.

She looks away. Outside, big snowflakes are in luxury descent. In the softpadded quiet she longs for them to touch her cheeks, to freeze her so gently she won't even know the exact moment...It may be that one wants to, or does, but it may also be that despite one's best efforts, one is undone, in the face of the other, by the touch, by the scent, by the feel, by the prospect of the touch, by the memory of the feel...She leaves the painting and presses her face against the window, hard. But it's warm inside and instead of freezing her face melts against the pane...And so when we speak of my sexuality or my gender, as we do (and as we must) we mean something complicated by it...Holding herself against the glass, she melts into two dimensions as the snow outside gets heavier, screening out the people passing on the road. Only the snow can see her now. She presses her fingers into the silky inside pocket of her jacket, searching for her phone. She must reach outside and make the photo. Neither of these is precisely a possession, but both are to be understood as modes of being dispossessed, ways of being for another, or indeed, by virtue of another. Maybe this was not the way. She looks back to the waiting painting and panics. The phone drops and breaks. She cries out, through the snow, through the painting, through the night.