

# No sleep for the alchemist

Blunt yellow days, my week,  
like a ridge of molars:

dusty dinosaur-jaw  
cud-chewing horror

bone-rhythm resolving everything  
into a pulp.

And your words, now,  
wheedling, wheedling in memory

like a phantom insect  
in a midnight room.

Sleep is a blessing  
of the first order

(kin to forgetting, which is  
beyond us) but

across that border too  
you follow me.

You are not she:  
only her image

returned to catch me  
at my alchemy.

See, then.  
See how I make all things poison.

TOM LIPS