

Karl Plank

NIGHT-PRAYER: BETHEL

And when you lie down in that place to sleep
the Night will show itself to you
as rods ascending as lights of lapis.

Stone pillows and unlathered ground—
may these give armistice from the war
of waking hours.

We can say it now. There was wreckage.

The history of harm raining on you
coursed through breaks in the skin

and splattered on garments of ivory,
bone and ghost. A house fell to its knees
and you were gone.

Now find the sleeping place that is yours.
Behind shuttered eyes peer into the other
darkness where waits the climbing path
and a voice neither dream nor nightmare.