

## White Noise

The faces are lifted up into the jumpy light,  
the blue electric glow  
buzzing them forward into closeup  
until the foreground is their eyes, and the fear that is their eyes,  
    and tangled hair,  
and mouths that grief has torn, clawed open.

(I am lying on a couch in a city that is shadows and glass  
and shadows of skyscrapered glass,  
that is steel and more steel and billboards  
where tall white legs are splayed against white sand, blue surf,  
and the red mouths, presiding high above the moving crowds,  
are lipsticked, smiling, smooth, and waiting for a cigarette.)

The TV flickers, grays, the faces are gone now  
into the undertow  
of hunger for the next thing and the next.

(I am lying in a city that is a text unwriting itself,  
that is a coffin of glass and a statue of glass,  
and the words *why hast thou*, and the words *how many* and *what number*,  
and *thy Father which is in secret*, and *thy Father*  
*which seeth in secret*.)

And after the news is over the jokes start up,  
the studio audience clapping on cue, pre-recorded, the theme music  
    rising,  
the wait right there we'll be back in a minute,  
the screen swallowing, swallowing, until there's an anthem,  
a test pattern, darkness, and only a pinprick of light breaking through.

And somewhere outside of all that are overhead lights and the shutting  
    of lights,  
there are rows of windows stacked like crates  
in the darkness, good night and good night,  
and the loneliness in which the eyes come back to haunt the empty screen,  
the eyes and the hands beneath them  
and the mouth saying,

"When I suffer, I cannot forget that I am, nor fail to know  
that I am nothing."