

E. Haworth Hoepfner

Opening Curtain

*so? he says is this close enough for us
though we wanted to stay back out of the way
and what's the path out from here
your forehead won't keep burning
red and white EXIT any longer than it takes
to finally arrive on time?
beginnings confuse our sense of hope
can't see the furniture that's rumbled out
and in the hush of what will follow
what's denied or lost what sofa
will hold eventually the crushed
sleeve and letter eyes squinted
shut like flintlocks.
death? heartbreak? some terminal
wonder still to come
this thing called waiting in the wings
while someone else does us
in front of all the lights applause
like rain receding from our hands
and who's this peering down
from the balcony and why
their look always their flat look
of someone being always being watched?*