Even now, I'm glad I was in the garden – no walls, fresh air, the maple tree with the rusty tassels that come in Spring and are its flowers. (Even now I don't want to talk about him). The bark of this tree is rough and cracked to a pattern of diamonds where it's old. He was a young man, fair. He came right up, too close, and stopped. He asked for money. That's all. But in concentric circles colonising the air around him was malignity. I don't say this lightly.

The good air born of the interaction between that tree and me turned to something unbreathable. Around him swirled nights corrupted by bruised eyes and mouths regurgitating what no mouth ever should. Had he done harm? Or was it done to him? I denied him money – and still don't know whether I was wise or cruel.