

Stefani Barber / LAST WINTER

when the rain began — a reason to pause
in the doorway of some unknown place
and kiss — the way home forgotten

when the rain began — it opened the door
and books by the window forgotten —
coffee once more — a home in the mouth

once the rain begins — note the rising
— the mutable strains quiet from below
— its steady, driving movement forward

makes places to hide — then to unfold
as the flower — you never were —
until the rain — made room to drink

until the rain's return — forgotten voices
— named in other seasons — something
familiar in the pounding — like holy

fluttering paper hearts mark the corner
— sweetness to draw them to you —
sweetness to make them stay

with you inside the rain — charming
the pants off — then watch how light
— reacting — refracting off of —

bodies obscured by nothing more
than this falling water — its permission
to behave as once — was natural

— no sun this morning, so instead —
the nocturne again — made a home
where none — could have been written

— the truth of this rain — its weakening
the reserve — whose meaning forgotten
— unhinge the door — do you know the story