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Monet's Water Lilies—MOMA

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MONET'S WATER LILIES—MOMA

There is no other reason for your coming here.
It was not by accident, you did not come—
crosstown in the rain, purchase a ticket
and enter through security into this lightsensored,
well-guarded room to stare
into a phantasmagoria—by mistake.
You came here deliberately, surrounding
your body with these walls' water lilies' lushness,
forcing your calm to face off the decadence
of a Friday-afternoon-lunch-crowd tour.
You must have wanted it badly, to breathe
a suppressed and saturated air, wanted
to take in the possession, monstrous,
a dumbed and drunk pallor, the lingering
aftermath onto a mess of surfaces, drenched,
not water or sky but the feverish sweat
of a masterpiece, the trembling of a torpor
that stirs pond water through the broken
skin of canvas and flower carcass,
a stagnant opening purging the sicknesses
of the heart. These lotuses float
on dream-induced eyelid shallows, on stems,
fighting off the higher powers, roots entangled
and tightening in your arms, their underwater
blossomed petals rotted in the waste of a paradise.

-Saudamini Siegrist
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