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"Ravel Piano Trio," "Bonnard Retrospective"

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Two Poems

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Ravel Piano Trio

Say I am a starving trembling fawn on your lawn. Do you say too many deer, and go for a gun?

Do you play Ravel's Piano Trio in A minor for me Breathing its hints of diamond moonlit meadows?

Do you throw me food with your own Nailbitten agitated hand?
Bonnard Retrospective

What ripe interiors whose wallpapers
Sofas and kitchen tables bleed together
Like the proverbial village of synchronized women

In the primitive world of someone like Gauguin
Or Rousseau, although surely this is France?
What womblike gardens, stifling, vibrant, junglish

Fabrics abuzz, strange purples flicking green
Like acid odors, softness of peach, dryness of knife,
A dangerous lime safety, where are we?

Areas whose colors are merely sketched in,
Whacked over jangling hot others, the brushstrokes
Actually spineless, nothing like Monet’s

Brisk rich purposeful economies,
Make a rather disturbing comfort,
And everywhere, tawny, inescapably bathing

The evanescent Marthe, all torso, all shadow,
A servitude that glows like absence
Syruped, raisined and available

Floating across a melancholy orange undercoat,
Are these the mysteries of domestic
Life in the modern void?

Exhausted plenitudes!
Meaning and technique elude our thought
Until in the final room his self-portraits

Shock: he paints himself in the image
Of a mail clerk, a peeled
Onion, chinless, imprurient, effaced.