

Alone with your house, Friday

Edward Hamlin

Nutmeg looted from your kitchen,
soap from your bath,
silk from your drawer—
lonely, strange grist
for a restless milling of you.
I go about my work
in a dark age of loss,
the sun a figment out of Bosch,
the maple floor seething.

Later I'll cull your skin
from the room's basket:
its tawniness from a walnut louver,
its thready weft from flax
gone fine in a blown vase,
its softness from the rumpled
flesh of your sheets,

Its wayward wrinkles
from the plaster's time-crossed creases.
You have gone ageless
for all the wrong reasons,
and long before your time.

Brooklyn, 1984, Chicago 1992