OLD DOG

When he goes I will feel nothing
except for the dry blank rush
past my face, the ache
pressed black as the scab

on his wrist where the needle went in,
and his air hunger deep as a lake

where the sky sinks day after splashless day
until it is summer again, and night.

And the farthest star, the one that can't
sting the thinnest strand through space,
the one that keens to be named,
will be all I have to place—that alone—
on the blanket still thick with dander
and coarse white hair.