

Naming the End

I love you either begins the lecture on ancient torture
or reveals the way back to Eve, who spends her last night
naming the flora, stenciling their anatomies
on her husband's somnolent skin. The husband is a god.

At daybreak, they abandon the garden. He carries into the world
the only diagram we'll ever have for devotion. In the dark
interrupted by sirens, I plant words you'll never know
you carry on your back. At dawn, you open your eyes

to the light in which you'll leave me. You rinse that other world
of steam and whisper from your skin. Soon, you're filling
your dented black car with all your clothes, all your records
and books and love. When you leave, your skin repeats: *I love you*.

Gods never sleep and terrible fates await us.
You get to choose. Once.