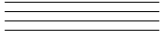


A N N A B E L L E



D E V I N J O H N S T O N

A white hydrangea trembles
in sodium-vapor light

each crimped petal cut
from taffeta or silk

each inflorescence a flock
or swarm of volatiles

intently feeding
on their milky pedicels

frenzied in sheer detail
like flounces on a camisole

a mop of foam or froth
that crumples at a breath

its full bloom
convulsive as a sneeze