

C R I M E S C E N E



H E N R Y W A L T E R S

Ephemera the wind forms out of snow
on river ice
confuse me, fool me, undermine
my alibis.

Legible runes spelled out so plain
a second ago
sift into others, a logolalia
of uncomposed

atoms aquiver in each flake,
and quarks in the atom
quaking, and infinitesimal strings
inside each quantum,

even in that sound: *flake*, which once,
and worlds away,
was consubstantial with the *flesh*
and pared from *flay*.

There: gone. Ephemera . . . White runes . . .
So where *was* I?
Snow script: its piecemeal book: deforms
the letter Y

into a branching helix whorled around
a drifting center
its spin steadies: like a top
skating the counter.

And then the eye can trace the figure-
 eight of its felony:
 to have blinked aside how many motes
 of memory,

to have forsaken what forms of change
 for sake of form:
 what dunes of quicksand shifting through
 the caruncle of dream,

the names I might have worn had I
 been born a girl,
 or elsewhere, or in such and such a time,
 or under anotherworldly

sign, all drifting out of constellation
 since having come
 unfinished, unforeseen from my
 haphazard womb.

Half matter, half wave, blurred then broken,
 the flesh in flakes
 caroms from world to word and back
 without mistakes

like an atomic clock. A hush.
 The wind's gone quiet.
 And the skin of the river's sleeved in in-
 divisible white

refracting through me. I'd lost track of . . .
 where I was. Compare
 a prism, throwing light on us
 piecemeal. What are

the odds a snowflake would come to rest
 precisely *here*?
 And the fact of its having happened –
 everywhere.