

## After

It's a breath-marriage  
a nerve-knitter, a safe-drowning  
a skin-melting time-slower:  
Dali's pocketwatches slumping  
like warm camembert.  
It is a fear-foe protector, a trust-well,  
banshee calming devotion.  
It is a tendril-growing, a rooting-in, a branching over.  
Wing-cupping, beak-burying,  
it is pelt-warmed, paw-swaddled.  
It is, for now, a fleeting eternity  
to be sunk into tomorrow night or perhaps  
never to be granted again.

*Southern Poetry Review 59(2) 2022, The Short Poem*