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Harkness Blues

Arthur Russell

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Arthur Russell

Harkness Blues

Hand under the sheets I thought of you;
Hand under your sweater I dreamed of you;
Hand in hand, we crossed the avenue,
then let go to pass around a lamppost.

Remember telling me your father's shoulders were uneven?
Remember saying his shadow had a shadow?
You locked the door to your room three days.
You wrote to me on rolling paper.

Through time, I sent you vagrant mail;
I sent you mail through brackish time;
I loved you poorly and unevenly;
I let you go, then disappear. I let you disappear.

Fourteen years, you wrote a love poem to an addict.
Fourteen years, you lived a love poem with a heroin addict.
Fourteen years, you fought for him.
He rolled away like a black nickel into a storm drain.

You walked the wet park and kicked cherry blossoms.
Depression gave you dominion over the dark, wet park.
You looked up into a black locust tree
and saw yourself suspended upside down.

I imagined that our time would come;
I always imagined that our time would come;
I thought your ear would produce a black pearl;
I was mistaken; no bend or hitch can join us.

You were my sofa and you were my tv;
You were my stiff and you were my hollow;
You were my baseball glove and my lock of hair;
I would cry if I saw you. I'm crying now.