

NICK COURTRIGHT

A Man Who Could Have Been

I have one thousand children, and I have one thousand faces.
I could be well-served to disturb a glass of ice
so it rattles around in ways that make concentration impossible.
There there, the glass and its ice will hold me.

It is a Thursday morning, née Wednesday night, July,
the great middle of the place, in its smallest room.
This time of year disallows wetness, so the water on the ground
was borne there unnaturally, like a winter robin.

Very black outside, like the sun is ninety-two million miles away,
and most birds stay in their nests for fear of crashing.
Inside, there is almost not enough room
for electric light, its almost realness, its almost almost.

I lied: I have no children but myself, and no faces but my own.
Even the month is August, and has never been July,
and that nearly unnoticeable scent of licorice on my breath
is the still-unreal summer, the equatorial grind

washed-out by grey oxygens and nitrogens,
the brighter somewhats and other things I cannot recognize.
Truth is, the meal has been eaten and fullness cannot be found.
We are nothing here but stories.