

## **Spring 2021**

John Rigney

Afternoon

It is an invitation opening itself into something like a surprise—

You say to me "I always imagined that we would do something together" and, suddenly, you stand and take some paper from a cabinet behind you

and place it, on the table (once between us) in front of me, and just as quickly, you sit beside me, close as close as a conspirator touching; my shoulder, your shoulder our intimacy a tension, a readiness

for action, a strike.

"What should we do?"

It is a miracle that anything ever happens to anyone except for you never letting an opportunity pass you by.

"Oh, I don't know... words, pictures—"

You turn your head to meet my question; a car outside idles, waiting, with the radio turned up.

"You go first."

You pull the jar of brushes, pens, pencils from the center of the table, where it sat, in lieu of flowers—

"There's some paint over there, on the desk."

I dip the brush and make a mark red: *bold*, I am thinking; an auspicious, audacious assertion

Beginning-

It feels like music, almost: my hand, the brush moving along the paper.

"Wonderful!" you say, and with an oil crayon (yellow-green) write into the space of my just-now red melody:

I can't stand the way she looks at me.

and then, perhaps by way of explanation:

Joan Crawford

And there we are: brushes, paints, pens, paper words and pictures together.