Lines for an Absent Friend

LARRY RUBIN

So you weren’t there—the emptiness
Would have shattered me, except I know how atoms
Coalesce and teach themselves to look
Like hair and teeth and muscles, smiles that
Beguile. There was a time these old illusions
Seemed to me the ultimate reality.
But now, while dissolution looms, I see
The spaces in the molecules, and know
New arrangements of these matters may
Unmask the sun and slyly redesign
My universe. You’ll still be there.