

## My Old Friend

—Travis L. Martin

You were just showing me that time...  
After I asked you not to.  
But you said it was important...  
To remember!  
Always remember, remember, and remember,  
Whether I want to or not.  
That's your game.

My memories can be so vivid—  
Describable only in the moment I experience them—  
Oscillate and define, interpret and try to feel.  
What was I thinking of again?  
I never can quite pin down where I was  
—when things changed forever again—  
Profundity's wake skews and slips away,  
Feeling is the constant distraction.

I sorted through those familiar scraps for you.  
Who was that boy in the picture?  
I simply give up on remembering facts.  
He looked so happy: A simple place to start.  
If I could only remember how he felt in that picture.  
(Everything else is a jumbled mess).  
He looked so happy.  
He must've been happy.  
I think I remember happiness.

Yes, I am quite sure, now:

Happiness is sickly-sweet-pinpricks,  
Ringing after everything goes quiet,  
Exhausted heat and demeaning encourageables,  
Rats and cockroaches running for shelter  
—Breathless—running so fast  
As imitators reenact their fallacious landscape—  
Imprinted within.

Something precipitated my preconsciousness:

I was warned.

Yes, now I am sure of it.

We are not friends at all, are we?

I know your name.

*He was me.*

And you are better off dead and buried.