Parameters

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Thirty-three years go by And not once do you come home To find a man sitting in your bedroom That is A man you don't know Who came a long way to deliver one very specific message: Lock your back door, you idiot However invincible you imagine yourself to be You are wrong Thirty-three years go by And you loosen the momentum of teenage nightmares Your breasts hang like a woman's And you don't jump at shadows anymore Instead you may simply pause to admire Those that move with the grace of trees Dancing past streetlights And you walk through your house without turning on lamps Sure of the angle from door to table From table to staircase Sure of the number of steps Seven to the landing Two to turn right Then seven more Sure you will stroll serenely on the moving walkway of memory Across your bedroom And collapse with a sigh onto your bed Shoes falling Thunk thunk Onto the floor And there will be no strange man Suddenly all that time sitting there Sitting there on what must be the prize chair In your collection of uncomfortable chairs With a wild look in his eyes And hands that you cannot see Holding what? You do not know So sure are you of the endless drumming rhythm of your isolation That you are painfully slow to adjust If only because Yours is not that genre of story Still and again, life cannot muster the stuff of movies No bullets shattering glass Instead fear sits patiently Fear almost smiles when you finally see him Though you have kept him waiting for thirty-three years And now he has let himself in And he has brought you fistfuls of teenage nightmares Though you think you see, in your naivete That he is empty handed And this brings you great relief At the time New as you are, really, to the idea that

Even after you've long since gotten used to the parameters

They can all change While you're out one night having a drink with a friend Some big hand may be turning a big dial Switching channels on your dreams Until you find yourself lost in them And watching your daily life with the sound off And of course having cautiously turned down the flame under your eyes There are more shadows around everything Your vision a dim flashlight that you have to shake all the way to the outho use Your solitude elevating itself like the spirit of the dead Presiding over your supposed repose Not really sleep at all Just a sleeping position and a series of suspicious sounds A clanking pipe A creaking branch The footfalls of a cat All of this and maybe The swish of the soft leather of your intruder's coat As you walk him step by step back to the door Having talked him down off the ledge of a very bad idea Soft leather, big feet, almond eyes The kinds of details the police officer would ask for later With his clipboard And his pistol In your hallway