

From the corner of Third and Washington
You can't see where your brother went
Out somewhere past the beat cops
And beautiful women who work for the government
They walk by in air-conditioned tunnels
That arc high above the street
While I sweat in my hot coffee
And daydream about how we might meet

Your mother asked for a picture
She says today is your birthday
In some strung out western stutter
Making all the world her ashtray
She adjusts her aviators
With an absent shaking hand
Tilts the camera forty-five degrees
And calls out modeling commands

When we used to go to parties
You'd spend an hour before the mirror
And I'd drink your gin
And ask about your high school souvenirs
Tacked on the wall above the bed
An old inkjet collage
But you were never much for talking
So I knelt to your mirage

We'd walk the three blocks westbound
In the moonlit Philly fall
And the party would be grand
All our friends would grin with pride
All our friends would be so drunk
And have such pleasant things to say
And at last, we'd see each other
In the way that we had dreamed to be seen

Those nights, your house kept secrets
We'd stumble up the stairs
My hands tore through your records
While your hands unpinned your hair
The both of us still green enough
To remove the other's clothes
A quiet signal of devotion
That I am happy to have known