

Nick Cialini

The Time on Dali's Watch

In the near-dark morning, unhook the moon
and pin it in its dark and velvet box.
Pull out your crumpled self from the cedar chest,
unroll it, drape it out to dry –
somewhere the sun, freshly stitched
into the seam of the sky, can reach.

Listen, in that singing sunlight,
to the cicadas tick off quick seconds –
the seconds of clocks that toll the hours
with gasps of thunder. Clocks rigged together
from the teeth of stars and the bones of the ocean.
Minutes don't matter to those inscrutable gears.

When your shadow rises to greet you,
reach out into the night; retrieve yourself, dew-dried;
roll it in on itself, like a large conch shell; stow it
away in the cedar chest. As you sleep,
keep your ear low and listening for it beneath the heart-
beat of the one beside you.

Take the moon from its hiding place –
the secret box you keep in your lingerie drawer –
like an heirloom Cameo, its image worn smooth,
and clasp it into place, just out of reach –
a little farther out the window than last night.

When your bed is laid out against the stars,
make quiet love to the rhythm of thunder.