

## Fatigue

When fatigue comes to you as an anaconda, grey  
like the belly of storm clouds, it is best not to struggle.  
Instead, lower your blinds (because of course,  
he does not like the light) and lie down and decipher  
patterns in the ceiling. You will hear the soft rustle  
of scales sliding down their rutted path in the carpet.  
You will feel his cool warmth and his darting,  
questing tongue. He will not unhinge his jaw;  
he will not sink his teeth into your arm  
and crush your radius and ulna together  
like the roots of mountains. He will only  
curl around you, coil himself around your chest  
(tight, but not enough to steal your breath)  
and whisper secrets in your ear. He will tell you stories  
you can faintly remember— from a dream, maybe,  
or early childhood. Later, he will only hum  
like rain on a pane of glass. You want to ask  
him where he comes from, how he knows  
these stories, where he found his voice.  
But distracted by that gossamer hiss, you never  
quite manage to notice the tip of his tail  
until it has slid down your larynx  
and replaced your own voice  
with stillness.