

Peter Sparks

Compass Reading

You could I never love. Built of a bulk
beyond my comprehension; lensed eyes 'big
as saucers' x-ray-burning to my five-
year infant guilt. Fruitless to plead my case
into that microphone I could not reach,
high on your bristling Harris Tweed lapel.
The smell of disappointment and of smoke.
Your (self)-importance never recognized,
demanding silence for each wireless news:
vainglorious hope they'll trumpet forth your K.

So when the silver thief (who always came
on Thursdays) took our memories, why did
he stoop to brass? Why do I chiefly mourn
that little gap where we had always kept
your compass with its swinging fleur-de-lys
watched by the crystal prism's sharp-cut eye?
It represented such a fine-wrought craft
and skill, and yet I never thought you deft
enough to use so delicate a dial.
Why should I miss this little piece of you?