**Five Stages of Sleep**

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1.

The transitional period, leaving the border of wakefulness:

settle in, float for ten minutes

in gentle theta waves, jumble the day's

thoughts, questions, memory

into crazy tapestry

that later might make sense. You'll begin

to feel heavy, dense. Your ego

will start to retreat. You won't think

you're asleep.

2.

You're very nearly in it, next stage

lasting twenty minutes,

brain bursting into sleep spindles

while your automatic thermostat fiddles

with itself. Your heart will slow. You'll begin

to feel a little cold

during this intermission's

rhythm

if you're not up against her or him.

3.

Waves of deep delta curl

and beckon, mammalian brain's

secret weapon. Enter the candlelit cave

of the unconscious, no longer aware,

truly cognizant

of what you're losing, body

deftly setting

sluggish blood to haunting music.

You're forgetting.

4.

The deepest stage,

a trench

leaves you face down

in delta waves. There's no line

indicating horizon, no sign

of shore. Relaxation

is what this is for, but

anxiety

may propel your body

to walk, eyes open

to raid

the refrigerator.

You won't recall this later.

5.

Arrival: city of dreams, rapid eye movement

hypnotizing, believing all

exactly as it seems. Try

to get lucid, fly

with simple thought, kill

every enemy

or go ahead,

have acrobatic sex

with whomever you've got the nerve

to undress. Your body's

become a new instrument:

indestructible. Singing and shameless.