

Oedipus Writes a Letter Late at Night

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So many nights I wake up with the foam pillow
comforting the ache between my legs,
but by morning say nothing
of the calm persistent dread
to the dreamgirl who reminds me
of the gold inside her womb.

When lights streaking by from the passing trains
wake me, full of the blurring faces,
I can't make out the ones I've loved
or called to love, or call again their names,
so many gone from coal to ash.

But my voice, with its shy prayer that pleads,
with its diverted eyes, lily loving and lost,
whispers into the wool blanket
I hold up to my lips; and of those
who hear me say their name, misunderstand and follow,

a few resist, a few confess,
a few love shame enough.
And I hold the disintegrated dream
against them, unable to sleep.
And I stare wide-eyed at the ceiling
and the shadows that swallow me.