

WALK WATCH (7)

It's long before sunup as I come to the block where the Arlington is steepest. Thighs ache to keep my pace. The ache is one sensation I feel before it vanishes into idea. How few I recognize and let the recognition unfold. Talking to Alex yesterday in the café—telling her that I'd shot meth for a year. What did I feel? How quickly I was talking myself away from what I'd begun to say, performing for her what I wanted to feel, to believe. Langer explains that illusion is valuable, but easily missed as what it might offer, if one lets oneself "handle a figure, no matter what it gives," and "see the illusion unmolested." I used to run most mornings before I ruined my knees. I ran, I used meth. Now, I use the momentum of walking—asking my legs for more, to keep moving a little faster. Yesterday, I was talking fast, Alex listening. Her listening was a smile that I wanted, that I realize is on my lips now, is changing the way my feet meet the pavement—the change is a sensation I've not yet tried to name—a sensation that's wider than what this one moment could hold? Already it's lost, disappearing into the words I use to keep it, the illusory that language creates. Talking to Alex, I narrowed a year of needles—a year that I wasn't ready to recount—into one illusion to perform. I listen to it now, as I

walk—a faster and faster pace. “Faster” is the first need that I’m typing now to report, but not appease. I don’t want to isolate it from other needs, but recognize it, and its habitat. Hearing my mind saying “faster, one more block this morning than yesterday,” I follow the feeling a little farther into its lair before I turn around, go home. “Home.” A word that won’t be appeased or avoided as illusion. A void.