GRANITE

Nancy Kuhl
(Avalanche or Avenue—) every heart asks which

—Emily Dickinson
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## CHAPTER I
### ACCOUNTS

## CHAPTER II
### THE DRAWING OF GRANITE BAY
CHAPTER III
THRESHOLD

Overwhelm and red flowers; I ask for help again. To try to formulate an answer; to think only of running. Shooting stars; what the eye can do; what light can do. Language, travel, time. How the past persists chemically in objects. Sun seen through water; attention to wishes. What memory can do. . . . . . . . 37

CHAPTER IV
ALONG THE GRAIN

The resemblance of sleep to death. Trains and clocks; an old song and an actual fact. Two kinds of desire. The beauty of fog and mist. Its dangers. Tenacity of hold. Similarities between geological processes and a family’s interaction. Disruption and intrusion; recognition of some forms of impossibility. One kind of nightmare. . . . . . . . 51

CHAPTER V
THIS HISTORY IN FRAGMENTS CALLED STONE

A vastness other than stellar. Blues, not-yet-blue. A fable. Thinking in the pattern of geological progression. A mineral lens. Crevice communities. Reflection. The transmission of ideas in stone. The overlay, the brink, the joint. Ice. Subterranean structure. Stories about granite. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 65

CHAPTER VI
TAKES PLACE

When I began to tell it, you said: *try to make something sensible rather than something beautiful*. One of us has gotten it all wrong.

Burnt tongue or bee sting: a minor wound might become the heart of the matter (who knows now which bleary instant, the exact damage?).

Then moonlight with its grim suspicions.

When I couldn’t hold it in mind, the story took shape in my lungs.
A common literary theme: difficult circumstances can be changed. Remember

*Man’s inhumanity to man?* That is: sometimes circumstances means a man,

not difficult so much as vicious or lethal and changed means one of us has to go

or no one is safe. Sometimes in a novel a rising moon marks a revelation, a turn

in the plot. In the real world, in your actual life, has moonlight ever changed anything?
A father spends years perfecting his hatred. One daughter is a double agent: under cover or going to ground. One records everything in the margins of paperbacks. Summer holidays, they strolled in humid air like any family (nobody says a word – this distinguishes them from the families in the books).

This family, this suburban dead-end family—they use silence like a rope.
It’s nothing special; anything knitted is made of knots.

Shadow falling: a fraction, a trace, a figure’s recognizable shape. That’s sequence; try to name function.

If her life were like a magic show, what would be the trapdoor opening to the grimy crawlspace beneath the stage?

A magician tips his hat. Someone’s daughter turns into a bird.