

ROBERT KLEIN ENGLER

Blue Line to Lake Street

Some mornings the edge of the bed is
the edge of a cliff. How easy it is to fall
into the blank obscurity of a day.

Putting on black socks, he pauses,
and remembers being young.
Who at twenty-one imagines betrayal?

The locomotive of his soul strains against
a hill of days—boxcars, coal cars—
clang, clang, clang knocks the crossing bell.

Stand back! Old man going out!

Some mornings the edge of the bed is
the edge of a cliff that tries to fool us
the way clowns fool children with balloons.

Imagine a young man comes into his life,
out of the blue, like the Sumerians
came with their wedge of language.

How serious would they stroll together
through the city of June sunlight, then?
Who cares if graves fill up tomorrow.

Today, every glance is a marriage.

Some mornings the edge of the bed is
the edge of a cliff where the homeless

walk aimlessly in the subway,

back and forth, then looking wide-eyed,
to pause close by the platform's edge.
Out of reach, a penny shines in muck.

Counterfeit wisdom is easy to come by
down here—for wired adolescents it's
no big deal—the end of America, or

what's-his-name who hangs upon his cross.