The Sleepy Beauties of Sound

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> *….the terra-incognita blanks map-makers of old*
> *used to call 'sleepy beauties.'*
> —Vladimir Nabokov, *Speak, Memory*

Not much practice yet
at blurs, garbles,
dropped syllables—unless you count
the losses on a poor
phone connection or when someone
turns the music down.

The next season though
could slam a door
and I might not look up
from a book. I'd be motionless,
riding the kind of current
no one else would notice, a quiet,
fuller than any noise.

For now it's guesswork: a territory
full of unmapped regions,
where paths revert to weeds,
and one only advances
by descent—so many steps
from the imagined to the lived.
And no rush to get there—

I've already caught myself
resisting under my breath,
not this, not that—
not sparrows rioting in the Euonymus
or the clatter of dishes in the sink,
not even the soft grinding
as I wind my watch.