

I expected to be sad in New Orleans

The barrel-chested singer had his lips
so close to the microphone
that the side street dimmed black as a blue note

If only I could lose sight enough
to feel my way through

Just wait

This blast of humid air shakes the pecan tree
& there's so much meat left on the branches

I almost bite down into the air
until under the green clapboard house
the cats fuck their loud fuck

The full belly of night is slit

Ms. Lynn downs can after can of Coke
as she surveys the block from her widow's walk

She said a rosary before the first mastectomy
She pulled every weed from the flower bed
before the second

My will has gotten stronger

When a Cadillac turns the corner
I know Uncle Paul is haunting me
his tongue red as cayenne

At Frenchman & Chartres the tuba
holds down a two-measure bass line
hooked in the snare
The tourist fixes his cell phone on the littlest
black boy firing his trombone from the curb

I'm leaning on The Praline Connection holding a bag
of vintage porn that cost \$50
I'll commemorate high school graduation in 1990 with this
purchase from the bitter homosexual bookseller

Somebody's selling ice cold water