

Chad Sweeney

AURA OF THE SPECTACLE

All history stood ahead of us
waiting and gesturing,

the blood of the lamb above the doors,
silence in the shape of a parliament.

I didn't recognize myself in the crowd.
The megaphone

was a form of reading,
an alphabet and harbor

buried beneath the streets.
The lamp, the letter, *nous objets*

d'art,
each wielded its arc of influence.

Bridges gathered distance,
words gathered roundness,

our things finally transcended
back into themselves

in the aspect of earthquakes
in the sign of the wheel.

ANOTHER NOVEL

At this point the book
settles into a foul mood

never to recover.
A visual silence, a table

asserting its corners.
To crouch into negative capability

and to not jump.
I try Rorschachs

but my doctor
displays only haunting images.

I wander to the edge of the city
where couches go to die.

The sparrow in the footnote
isn't real. Neither is it not real.

Green upholstery hillside.
4th-dimensional deer.

Even when alone I'm an outsider
and excuse myself into the next room

then the next, and so forth
until my ear is flat against a wall.

Chapter 11 hands down its decision:
Innocent!