

## **We Do Not Enter the Gallery**

Which means the docent does not look at us confused.

Heather does not fail to find instructions on touching the art.

Alex does not notice the digital tour is only available for certain artworks.

Lorraine does not struggle to read the didactic panel hung high above her chair.

The panel does not claim there is no story behind the French artist who spent  
the latter half of his life sculpting the same bronze figure over and over.

I do not start thinking about those life tasks I am stuck doing over and over,  
do not think about curating three meals or setting tomorrow's  
alarm or scheduling another appointment and paying for it.

I do not grow confused at which tasks I enjoy and which I abhor,  
which make me happy to be alive and happy to be dying.  
I do not walk in circles fluttering my hands as this happens.

I do not snap painfully back into my body after zoning out, do not feel bad  
that I am wasting my time in this gallery that I paid money to enter.

Leaving early, I do not begin to wonder what it might look like  
if my friends and I built a gallery of our own.  
I do not begin to wonder what it would feel like to belong.

I do not fail to convince myself to call Gabbie or Jody or Kurt when I start  
having a psychotic episode alone in the crowded subway station  
even though they have told me every day since I have known them  
that I can call any of them for anything  
literally anything this not anything none of this happens  
none of this happens I do not  
stumble up and down the long hall of the train  
the long haul of training to live like this I do not  
somehow make it to my apartment I do not  
Turn on the light I do not find a great emptiness waiting I do not  
shut my eyes at the sight