

Gone for the day, she is the day

by [Christian Wiman](#) in the [November 2, 2010](#) issue

Dawn is a dog's yawn, space
in bed where a body should be,
a nectared yard, night surviving
in wires through which what voices,
what needs already move--and the mind
nibbling, nibbling at Nothingness
like a mouse at cheese:

Spring!

*

Sometimes one has the sense
that to say the name
God is a great betrayal,
but whether one is betraying
God, language, or one's self
is harder to say.

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Gone for the day, she is the day
opening in and around me
like flowers she planted in our yard.
Christ. Not flowers.
Gone for the day, she is the day
razoring in with the Serbian roofers,
and ten o'clock tapped exactly
by the one bad wheel of the tortilla cart,
and the newborn's noonday anguish
eased. And the tide the mind
makes of traffic and the bite

of reality that brings it back.
And the late afternoon afterlight
in which a much-loved dog lies
like a piece of precocious darkness
lifting his ears at threats, treats, comings, goings . . .

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To love is to feel your death
given to you like a sentence,
to meet the judge's eyes
as if there were a judge,
as if he had eyes,
and love.

This poem appears in Wiman's Every Riven Thing (Farrar, Straus and Giroux).