

Epithalamion for Tyler

I thought I knew something
about loneliness but
you go to the stockyards

buy a pig's ear and sew
it on your couch. That, you
said, is my best friend—we

have spirited talks. Even
then I thought: a man of
such exquisite emptiness

(and you cultivated it so)
is ground for fine flowers.

For Mother on Father's Day

You never got to recline
in the maternal tradition,
I never let you. Fate,

you call it, had other eyes,
for neither of us ever had
a counterpart in the way

familial traditions go.
I was your brother,
and you were my unhappy

neighbor. I pitied you
the way a mother pities
her son's failure. I could

never find the proper
approach. I would have
lent you sugar, mother.