

AMY ALZNAUER

Reading Lips

a topology of touch

Forgive my fingers pressed against your face
To hear by catching the force of air
Expressed, each little stretch, each grimace
And slack, as if by touch I mean to stare.

So intimate for one drawn back by sight,
Your world spread coolly out through distance seen
Not clasped, up close and muggy to you tight
Like mine, nor lost when space drops in between.

But what if touch could see? Could bring
In one collective sweep this place to mind?
All things would rush against my skin and fling
No heat or texture just the airy blind

Caress of wood, the fabric's droop, and fleet
Of dust. Each cornered, blunt, or jagged shape
And dreg of space would rain, a single sheet
Of tactile sense like vision's steady drape.

I'd feel you flush, your body's breadth and height,
Upon my length. I'd know at once this room.
And you inside the room. Your every sleight
Of hand and careless gesture I'd consume.

Instead, I sit before your gaze, submit
To some ubiquitous touch, and let you trace
My frame, envelop me. So please admit
The barest press of fingers to your face.