NO MATTER

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matter

stones
when the letters are stones
    dragged    placed    abandoned
snow
when the letters are snow
    packed    curved    left
yellow chalk
when the letters are yellow chalk
    up on the blackboard
green grass
when the letters are green grass
    woven    placed in shade
bat
when it brushes arm-hair
    in the cave’s deepest black
gash
when the glass-slivers
    bubble up from the trench of blood
snow

was there
a time before
the wind the whiteness
the cold was
there a summit
was there a voice
calling me home was
there a time
before the sled the
runners the long
hill was there
a time when I
wanted
anything else
out
–laws
in the cold
–casts coming
of nowhere
of the blue
of nowhere
of the past of the
–house of history
of time just
in time
just just
in time
of a long dream
just
in time to ward
off to state
of the blue
of their own mouths
–bound just
for the sun
for the air
for glory for
beulah land so
far now it’s
in so very
far it’s
very in
sweet tooth

a dream so weighted plumbing
mind’s whole deep down
to the wellspring then
pulling wellspring mind
hole in after it a
dream so weighted no
but not by horror light
filling the peach room cricket-thick
night straining the front
door screen you and always
you hair-frizz pinch
of flesh closer than
darkness than day closer
than waking than fact
wedding

the word to the cave

no part of the space that is not

the word  the cave after

all is the space  the word after all

others is all the space that

is the cave
no matter

is this right then we put
all our ducks in a row all
our ducks of the under-word all made
of quarks which are or are
not matter but certainly are not
meaning though the ducks
mean as we line
the ducks up they make
a surface a surface of
water surface and water that
are not do not matter but
do mean the matter then
cannot mean the meaning is
nothing but we keep
on lining up the ducks beneath
the surface of water
is depth the more ducks the more
depth and dark and
murk all of which is no
matter no matter not matter but is
dark murk and deep story
layered upon story stories without
matter but with meaning how
is it possible to live like
this to make stories that
mean but are no matter
JOEL CHACE has published poetry and prose poetry in print and electronic magazines such as 6ix, Tomorrow, Lost and Found Times, Coracle, xStream, Three Candles, 2River View, Joey & the Black Boots, Recursive Angel, and Veer. He has published more than a dozen print and electronic collections, including Translations From After (anabasis/extant, 2004) and drawer (xPressed/Lulu, 2005). He is a NEH Fellow. For many years, Chace has been Poetry Editor for the experimental electronic magazine 5_Trope.