

Stephen Dunn

ODE TO ILLUSION

When I've invited you into my life,
you've never refused.

No doubt you understand

how often I've wished to feel
out of this world,
become unlocatable, say, to those

who'd want to pin me down.
There are so many of us, though,
in need of your smoke and repertoire

of dreams. Sundays in town
it's you, I fear, behind those fixed,
beatific smiles. Tell me,

do I look as foolish
when you're with me?
I've tried not to wear you like green

eye-shadow, have always known
you don't like to be known.
But my disguises are old;

they've begun to look like me.
Come back, slip into bed on my side.
I promise not to lift your veil.

