

Li-Young Lee Reading, 1995

Joy Arbor Karnes

I am a spot of darkness
that makes Lee think
he's alone, writing for the invisible
audience. He talks of the shapes,
the hierarchies of love. He reads
a poem about stroking a woman's hair-
hair of human musk.

Your hair smells like summer, fresh-cut
grass. I can smell it in the dark,
and again, I am speaking
to you in my head, carrying you with me,
explaining the garbage of my life,
as if a moment without you is betrayal.
All my poems are addressed to you,
wrapped as gifts. I am a cherry
to roll over your tongue.
Swallow me as I've dreamt you would.