



Vienna

Vienna is mine in photographs:
black and white; tint of gold.

From Danube steps we held our breath
with arthritic men and angles
on fine, abandoned carriages
suspended in the air;
waiting to creak and waiting to fall

for snapshots. We stopped for wine
on the Stubenring, shared its rusty tongue
across broad boulevards
and stiff architecture
that held their hung flowers
like middle-aged men

on a date. Bosomed ladies fussed;
their bad perfume chased us away
to the Rathaus
where the dancing had rules
and forbidden corners.
We were scarcely dressed for it:
I suggested that that was the point

of Vienna. You decided on
pastries and cobbles with bitter coffee
and hooves resounding
through Hofburg. We sat with crumbs
and determined how empires ended
in brick and bosoms;
a ponderance of trams.

Schonbrunn lifted its skirts for us
while the sad-eyed emperors watched
above disappointed gardens
and dust: we scuttled under,
like beetles. Whispering. Plotting.

