

1996

just shy of freedom

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Recommended Citation

Boyle, Sean (1996) "just shy of freedom," *Exile*: Vol. 43 : No. 2 , Article 22.
Available at: <https://digitalcommons.denison.edu/exile/vol43/iss2/22>

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just shy of freedom

laughter of women follows from behind
 together, still singular
 like subjects of similes,
 fills boredom with sadness, longing
 sympathy
 for men, who don't seem to understand
 it haunts like their footsteps
 too close, ominous
 if only for ambiguity's sake

then realizing the lengths reached
 from the safety of their masquerade,
 chameleon costumes changing with company
 and the calls of unity
 they retreat into silence,
 without words

in that moment
 laughter reverberates
 it sounds the same
 but hollow

—Sean Boyle '00