

To Live

Ilya Kaminsky



To live, as the great book commands,
is to love. Such love is not enough! –

the heart needs a little foolishness!
So I fold the newspaper, make a hat.

I pretend to Sonya that I am the greatest poet
and she pretends to believe it—

my Sonya, her stories and her beautiful legs
her stories and legs that open other stories!

And I say: a human being
understands the universe: its music

makes us foolish. I see my future: a yellow raincoat,
a sandwich, a piece of tomato between my teeth,

I raise my infant daughter to the sky—
I am singing as she pisses

(Old fool, my wife laughs)
on my forehead and my shoulders!

