

Goodbye

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I said goodbye to Paul,
who used to bounce a ball
against the dormitory wall,
brooding. And I said
goodbye to Rich, after
drinking strong coffee,
after the long, long party.

I said goodbye to my grandfather,
hanging up the phone.
His ancient voice still rings
in my ear. I said *goodbye*,
goodbye to a woman
I loved once, hugging her
out of habit, kissing both cheeks.
Goodbye, we said, *don't call me!*

Goodbye, I said to Nick,
and later I said, *hello*,
and *goodbye* again later,
knowing later I'd say, *hello*.

Goodbye, I said to certain
places, some of which
I have forgotten and others
which I hope to forget.

I said goodbye to childhood
and youth, and I hope to say
goodbye to old age too.
(Each time I told myself
goodbye, I took our hand
warmly and thanked us
profusely for looking both ways
before crossing busy streets.)

I said goodbye to snow and leaves.
I said goodbye each day to the sun.
See you later, nature! I cried.
Goodbye, wind, I shouted,
I'll see you out of town!

Goodbye to a feeling,
goodbye to a thought
that kept me up all night,
trying to say goodbye.

Goodbye to a car that went
everywhere with me.
Goodbye, money, I'm sorry
you couldn't stay long.
Goodbye, virginity, I'm glad
I kept your photo.
Goodbye to the home
I couldn't leave soon enough.

And to all the things
I want to do and
to all the things
I no longer want to do
I say goodbye to them too.