

MODERNISMS

There's
a modernism

where everything
must be
filtered
through

one's
esteemed
heritage

Experience
made clever
by a series
of references

to someone
greater—
and yet
surpassed—

introducing language
technologies
from linguistic
labs,

antecedents footnoted,

to guide
specialized
interpreters.

Then there's
modernism

where one learns

their raspy
voice

stuttered
cadence
gasping
breath

weedy-
garden
vocabulary

fraught
exchanges

with fellow
grubs

who might hear
themselves partially

echoed in
the clamor of
words

Comfort with

the ever-
entangled

moment

a damaged
home

an imperfect
aspect

a swarm of unkempt

associations

a series of
knotted

poking
branches

taste for
simple
complexities

& the depth
within a jagged
surface

I can
look
and say This
is me—
to that
I at least
will not
object.

Would you like
to hold my

hand for
a brief
walk along

this precarious
embankment?

Neither offense
nor surprise at
your denial—

I can't promise you
won't

slip

in

mud