camera lucida

at that point in his prose
where the poet writes of his beloved
as a child, alive,
yet already dead to the future,
as he pictures her
in the photon-swirl of a winter garden
and she quickens like a revenant:
at precisely that point
you take his trembling hand in yours
to steady it
through the obliterating finale
where the echo of what's life
passes neatly
through the punctuating eye.