

Pieces of the poet

by Sara Fitzpatrick Comito

This is the poem you leave behind
that you die in the middle of. Would
you want to be a tea drinker, circles of
honeyed milk a slovenly notion among
the measured stacks? Expurgate by small

cauldron fire the incriminating diaries.
Plant a demure brandy flask and catalog
your correspondence with the semifamous
author. This is your museum
of yourself. What to write? Choose one
to be your favorite pen. There's so much

your friends don't know about you. This
is the clouded window through which he
gazed at length. And this, the photo of his
long-dead wife. Cancer, young. We only
met him later. Pretty girl, though. So sad.
He had the most amazing perspective given

everything! And now, he, cut down in
his prime. He would joke about being
camouflaged on the couch. All that tweed.
Odd, the poet was a walking cliché. And
none of you ever read a word? Glances
all around. He had struck up a friendship

with that doctor, was working on "something
medical." What's left on his desk, then?
Just impressions on the notepad, revealed by
pencil rubbing: succinylcholine chloride.
Strange title. And shame he didn't get too

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far with it.

