

DAVE MALONE

Red Center

after Mark Rothko's No. 15

Could Rothko have known
you are so much woman
when oil sprung from inside, not daubs
but red and yellow gashes
slicing from his arms. A tall man
invisible in front of canvas nearly twice his size.

Supernova bursts spread top and bottom,
logged in redshift of his making.
No above and below in three-dimension space.
Only star fuel where you and I take shape,
apparitions partitioned here only for explanation.

That midsection is curious.
A cloaked croak for critics.
But intersection for you and me.
A pair of nebula
firing through atmosphere
nothing but light and heat
like these August afternoons
in the Delta
where farm fields are stripped of beans and cotton
the horizon, a magenta strip
of oil paint, vanishing into black.