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Early Instruction

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EARLY INSTRUCTION

after Still Life, Henri Fantin-Latour, 1866

Consider the tender flesh of the orange,
this orange,

the one he's split open to please you—
releasing

its lush, percussive scent. Remember
what came before

the threaded membrane
burst,

when to imagine tasting the ruptured interior
of an orange

in midwinter was its own seduction.
Even

the flowers. Even the teacup,
the closed book.

All else still, complicit in this
unlacing.