

D. S. WALDMAN

After Modernism

Across Europe, in a slow warp, titles become inaccessible
to their paintings.

Say *cello*, but mean *sky*. See color and think *truth*. See color
and feel (red flower

on a white skull). • To still life, a motion like boredom,
a clock's lonely march

toward *Ceci n'est pas une pipe*. Toward E. 9th St
—the window overlooking, open,

streaming music. Below, pedestrian improv: less line
or curve than the wake

•

of both, or neither, dispersing. Steam. Slow-dying map
of intention.

As though *unfinished* were redundant in reference
to *masterpiece*. As though dying

is a prereq: red wall so red there's white • in it: see
red and think music

out the window, thrilling the flames the streets have
ribboned into. War's preamble

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just as chilling, sometimes, as its wreckage (the tank a neat fit
between buildings—a familiar

lyric). • Familiar faces, in portrait, sharded like cities
—doric eyebrow,

rococo cheekbone—sunken like faces. Hope no longer authorized.
Hope a handkerchief

for the tired—the too tired for handkerchiefs
and what they're used for.