The Green Flash

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It was luck I was there on a Sunday
when Mr. H.'s son (the drunk, also my clinic patient)
shouted at a nurse that his father was dead.

I went to see (the nurse didn't). H. was
inanimate

as a wind-up toy run-out in mid-stride,
his foot sticking out from under the sheet
barely warm and weirdly doughy.

The son came in then (I think). There were other patients in the room.

I was looking at H.'s face and
saw a blue light evaporate off it.

It was like a flame in bright sun, there
for a definite second, then

you can't see it
and want to pass your hand through to see if it's hot. No one
else reacted as if they'd seen.

The only lovely thing about him had been the sea-blue eyes.

That was the light? How corny! I thought, under-reacting
(as usual), to the disturbing/moving supernatural sight of—

what, the ascent of his soul? Defaulting, I said nothing
until, weeks later, a woman I was charming said that once, in a
trying time,

she'd walked outside and found herself suddenly bathed in a
shaft

of light that warmed her soul and God etc.

Maybe a cloud moved? I asked.

Or maybe as the brain drops to lower valence

its energy passes out through the eyeholes, lighting up
the iris? I'd believe that, having stood at the Pacific

watching the sun dissolve into the water and waiting
for the green flash that's supposed to be seeable. That I made
much of—

hooted when I maybe saw it, felt enraptured sort of, and told
everyone,

though it was subtle at best. Did she have a bigger vision or
just a better
attitude? I wasn't looking for anything—and didn't find it.

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