

still, i worry about my liver

my favourite part in the movie is when the nobel
laureate for literature dies of a heart attack
i watch the scene over &
over & over

all i can tell you is when the russians
came my great grandparents fled lithuania
for scotland my uncle has dementia he's
the only one who remembers
anything

when your own time comes to flee roll your
culture thin till holes appear in its dough layer
it in with your smalls your aerosols your
liquids over 100ml cram
what's left into the arms of your cardigan your turtle
neck the heels of your shoes where they'll
look for the bombs

at the final check point when they ask if
you have anything to declare
rummage for your tongue & tell them:

Y E S

E V E R Y T H I N G

that night in the forest they said reveal 2
surprising things no one knows about you i told
them (1) about the nobel laureate thing &
(2) my *even-i-have-difficulty-understanding* obsession

with the russian submarine movie, *Kursk* how i
watch those submariners' final moments over &
over & over how i shiver in that black
icy brine as though it were my own
watery grave

before the war the algorithm served me up
great platters of russian literature i devoured the
meat + 2 veg of dostoevsky tolstoy solzhenitsyn
—drank down their gravy like
i was starving unless I'm forced to i never drink
vodka

but still i worry about my liver
[i come from a long line of livers]

that night in the forest the word *vodka*
in my mouth felt like *poison* i love dill
pickles black bread & russian sausage
but i am unsure
if this makes me
a bad
person.