

I did nothing to deserve this; I just walked away.
The gates were unlocked, the guards

with their pitchforks skedaddled, demoralised
and unpaid, paperwork shredded

and all their absurd passwords
forgotten. Albert Camus drifted off years before,

my only fan, sipping espresso from a fragile cup,
ashing Gitanes with delicate fingers,

jotting in his diary: *I just got so bored.* I miss it

in a way. After a few centuries you grow fond
of the boulder, its cool little dimples

and fissures pressing again and again against

your hell-scorched cheek. I liked the implacable
bulk of it, its undefeatableness,

how sheer inertia's more than enough to pull you

apart. I miss getting patched up by those nurses
in the Dispensary, their skilled,

dutiful hands putting things right for another few
centuries. At first, Zeus came down

to gloat. Then he grew ironic, then cynical, then,

I don't know – sad? Envious? He brought me
new shoes, a second-hand wineskin

full of Heaven's best. He'd suggest I knock off

early and have a nice weekend. After a while it
wasn't a request. I'll never

admit this on my résumé, but I think I got sacked ...