

# The International Forgiveness Institute

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*Forget it*, I say to my ex-lover when he says thank you for returning his shampoo, the pair of sunglasses I didn't break, and I shrug, that tiny tug upward of shoulders, just a twitch of resistance in order to get it started — then the shoulders drop, the box of his stuff drops

into his open arms, and when I am walking later, as I slow to place my foot over a blackened leaf hardened with early frost and listen to the slight, newly knitted ice threads break under the weight of my boot, I look up for no reason

and see a hanging signboard that reads, "International Forgiveness Institute," in carved black letters. It shudders slightly as cars go by, and it's easy to miss — I have missed it before, on this clotted city block in Minneapolis — the International Forgiveness Institute trying to loosen some distraught knot far off in France, Japan, South Africa. Just some people

on telephones, I'm thinking, in a small dusty office with little rays of sun widening, then dwindling in the room each day, and they're there calling and calling to see if there's anything they can do.