

JONATHAN GREENHAUSE  
**THIS IS NOT A PIPE**

This is not an apple tree.  
This is not a sonnet about how my lady is or isn't like the sun.  
This is not an ode to New Jersey  
nor a supermarket for aunts  
nor a homage to homophones. This is not a telephone.  
This is not a pay-per-view wrestling match.  
This is not a referendum on a hot-button political wedge issue.  
This is not the way others see us  
despite our efforts to make them see how we really are.  
This is not an excuse.  
This is not a metaphor for skinny dipping.  
This is not an attempt to be clever  
nor a last ditch effort to find meaning in my life.  
This is not a call for help. This is not  
another extraordinary performance by Daniel Day Lewis.  
This is not a sketch of my private parts.  
This is not sunlight. This is not sex on the beach.  
This is not how I imagined my life would turn out. This isn't  
how the story goes/ends/unfolds.  
This is not the sound of a heart slowly breaking.  
This isn't the last time we'll see each other  
before tragically going blind.  
This is not a tree felled in the Amazon  
nor a bowl of melted chocolate-chip ice-cream nor my dissection  
of a cow's large intestines.  
This is not as creepy as this sounds. This isn't  
a new translation of a Pablo Neruda poem  
nor some pilfered idea  
from Nicanor Parra. This is not a banana.  
This is not an allusion to sadomasochism. This is how far we'll go

to get it right. This is a poem  
by process of elimination, & this is not a negation  
of everything written before it:  
This is the end of the poem, & this is only the beginning.