



Toppling Mountains

New & Selected
Poems

by Andrew Gent

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Some poems in this collection appeared previously in the following magazines. Additional copyright restrictions may apply as a consequence.

<i>Blue Buildings:</i>	“Orphan”
<i>Bradford Review:</i>	“Belief”, “The Sleep of Trees”
<i>Brooklyn Review:</i>	“Starting Over”
<i>Missouri Review:</i>	“Epitaph for Bice Donetti”
<i>Painted Bride Quarterly:</i>	“Poem (It's stupid to be happy...)”, “After Visiting the Home of a Famous Poet”, “Nature Poem”, “Theoretical”, “Reading Late at Night”
<i>Poetry East:</i>	“Almanac”, “The Wake”, “The Blue Wind”, “The Ancient Philosophers”, “Bad Dog”, “We Want Everything We Do”, “Not Writing Political Poems”, “What Inches Down”, “The Box”
<i>Quarry West</i>	“Poolside”
<i>Southern Humanities Review:</i>	“Listening in the Dark”
<i>Western Humanities Review:</i>	“The Swimmer”, “Variations on a Poem by Li Po”

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“When King Wu marched on Yin, he had three thousand war chariots and three thousand brave warriors. He said ‘Do not be afraid. I come to bring you peace, not to wage war on the people.’ And the sound of the people knocking their heads on the ground was like the toppling of a mountain.”

— Mencius

Early Poems

Romance

I

No one's serious after twenty!
Ulterior motives and lack of interest
soon make us forget the pleasures of alcohol
and weeping openly with strangers —
rivaling the wind with our ingenuity.

II

Your heart is an open book
a poet i slowly erasing...
One day you meet Frank O'Hara on the street.
He says he's working at the Arthur Rimbaud Hotel.
Anything may be possible from this position.

III

You're going to move uptown
and give up writing this book
because you know she'll never read it.
No one's serious after twenty!
A bottle of beer waves to you from the corner.

IV

Maybe you'll give up poetry forever.

V

Maybe you already have.

Sleep

The lull before the storm
The storm that follows
The black sails a ship puts on
The anchor caught on a sunken ship
The impossible answer to the easiest question
The wind in a vacuum
The air
The air
The way it refuses questioning
The lawyer the wind hires in its defense
The judge
The black sails
The ship the anchor belongs to
The vacuum around it
The wind
The black sails
The air before the vacuum
The knife that cut the anchor free
The case for the defense
The air that follows
The alibi for the ship with the impossible answer
The hole in its side
The air that fills it
The knife that follows
The wind around it
The air
The air

The black sails

from
The Light Deformed By Monstrous Signs

Poem

Someone has put infinity in a box.
The snow is gone, the stars
are missing from the sky.
Our dreams escape us.

The color white is dirty.
One murderer after another
has lost hope.

Sin is no longer interesting.
But sleep is still here,
like a patient waiting to have his teeth pulled.

Someone has put infinity in a box.
How can we go on living
if God is so close to us?

In the street a child is playing with a box.
Inside: snow, stars, dreams.

The Wake

(for Franz Wright)

The glow before the match
ignites. The sound of a dead man
dragged across the floor
in the room above me.
That fraction of a second
when I look over my shoulder
and see nothing: then
I see. Several women
in the crowd have begun to weep,
their limbs dissolving
inside their clothes.
I had forgotten how much
they meant to me, these mourners.
The silence that follows
any second, any heartbeat.
The air closing in
on the flame
like the wake of a speedboat
out of control, or
heelmarks in the dust
of an empty room: minus one.

Orphan

My face has been crossed out in the photograph
they will take at my grandfather's funeral.
I can already feel the needle
they will use to stitch the black clothes
on me. They say until I am old enough
I will not be allowed to take these clothes off.

But I try to tell them
I don't know him. Why
should I be the one
to carry all these strangers with me?

They say it is not my grandfather
or my grandfather's funeral,
but the lesson I must learn.

In time, they say, I will be free
to do as I please. But until then
I must walk hunched over
as they have shown me.

I beg them to close my eyes
but again they say no. On the windows
they have painted the rain.

Poem

It's stupid to be happy in August
with the rent due and the tv on the blink.
The weather's sadly predictable:
humid with no change in sight.
If I decided to visit a friend
I know no one would be home.
Everyone's taking a vacation
although they haven't done anything for months
and they won't go anywhere but stay home
and refuse to answer the door.
I make another large drink and hunch down in my chair.
That's why I love my friends.
This miserable world's their brainchild.
And if they heard I had run off to Tahiti
or joined the Armed Forces, they would be appalled
and truly concerned for my welfare.
But that wouldn't be for weeks
and by then it would be
October.

Dust

A story told
from only one point of view.

The room
the story occurs in.
Not actually the story,
which we do not know,

but the consequences
of it. The heroine,
alone in the room
and the sound she makes
sobbing into a large white handkerchief.

Ah, the sound
as it disturbs the air.
No... the air
coming to pieces
and those pieces

that never quite come to rest.

Lyric

Deep in the heartlands
the house pulls at its anchor.
On the porch a radio cackles like hens
before a storm. The wind, the wind
that can be seen coming for miles,
catches in the branches of a tree
while the soft artillery of cows
wade in through the tall grass
whispering you, you, you...

Belief

I hold my hands out when it rains
to convince myself it's true. This is no lie.
My fingers are scarred by my faith
in candles. Since I must sleep alone

I leave all the lights in the house burning.
But this only holds for when I sleep, mostly
I prowl the streets convinced I can overcome my fears
with darkness. But no, I scrawl your name a hundred times

on the backs of buildings, then cross them out.
And, when I do sleep all night, every night
the same thing in my dreams. Of course
dawn is the hardest, coming so slowly,

relentlessly. There is no escaping it.
And, as a last resort, since I must sleep alone,
I draw your face on the pillow
then smother it, convinced

you never loved me.

Wish

The angle of trajectory
of a lash falling into the eye of a man shaving
in the reflection in the lips of a woman he loves
on a train speeding past the station where he must get off
before his life is altered irrevocably. He is asleep
and dreams of the cigarette he is smoking
as he stands before the firing squad.

The smoke drifts lazily up into the windless air
and a fleck of ash settles into the corner of his eye. It stings
and he can't make out why he is there
until he remembers the train and the woman he has never met before
who is getting off now, and he would follow her
except for the pain in his eye which is the lash that woke him
like a bomb which must be dismantled
before it dissolves with a tremendous howling
taking the man and the train with it.

A Trick of the Light

It's bone-talk: getting down
to the least audible,
the hum and drone
of it.

I mean,
each dawn the wind
does this: photon by photon
it lifts and carries
like a wrestler getting in shape.

But it's not so simple.
For us, it's getting
to where one corpuscle
wants to marry the next

build a little house
and settle down.
Think of it
this way:

five minutes in the sack
and your alibi's blown.
So it's back to
drawing the wagons
into a circle

and inviting the neighbors in.
It's back to going to bed alone
after a quiet evening
and not sleeping
or going to bed together,
every cell humming,
and not letting on.

The Blue Wind

I would like to say a word or two for the wind.
I would like to hold up this blue day
until we are filled with gladness. I would like to tie you down
and feed you the blue wind until you are sure

it cannot escape us. I would like
to drive my car into the river and swim
for the sheer joy of it. Of this I am certain:
I would like to be signposts counting the miles to you

for the blue wind. More than anything
I would like to be the reasons you get up in the morning
and the reasons you don't, when you don't.
I would like to know why

you have never heard of the blue wind
and why you refuse to believe it comes, as it does,
day after day. I would like to smother our grief in a sack
already filled with bones. I would like to go on

singing and dancing long after my bones
are dreary and dust-covered... Believing
one dream is better than another
because it begins and ends with the blue wind.

And now
while you are sitting comfortably,
I would like to say a few words for the wind.
A few dismal phonemes for the life-giver, the breath-taker,

the wind.

Taking Down the Wind

It begins by taking down the nails
that hold the air in place.
Then silence is packed away
in a sack used for carrying grain.
Next comes the rain (although it is rarely spoken of)
sorted and wrapped in the finest silk.
Quickly, before they can fly out of reach,
gather the birds, stray clouds, and the clock tower
in the village square where it chimes the hour.
Once all this has been done
the wind will come quietly.



It begins the same way:
taking down your footsteps
leaving you nowhere to go.
Next it takes down the stars
(don't be afraid) it has done this
many times before. Soon it will begin
to wear away at your sleep like a brick
thrown from the silent clock tower
is worn away by the air it passes through
until all that's left is a handful of sand.
When it reaches the ground, collect it
for it will be needed later.
Don't be afraid. It is only the wind,
returning.

Epitaph For Bice Donetti

(After Salvatore Quasimodo)

The clouds took her by surprise.
Lying in a field five kilometers north of Musocco
where the road to Tindari bends around an old elm tree,
she was watching the wind play among the branches
when they came for her.
Not real angels though,
but a child's impression of angels
with huge silk wings and a halo woven from wild daisies.
O traveler, as you pass this place where an old elm tree
and a stone wall guard the entrance to a field, stop a moment
to think of the one who died too young to be anything but a plaything
for the wind, the reason an old man writes words
on a piece of paper. An old man like any other,
a dreamer
struggling to wake.

The Sleep of Trees

I don't understand the sleep of children.
The tears still in their eyes.
I don't understand a sadness

so pure it is water,
and not the voices
I have come to expect
the clock cannot alter.

The trees are not our enemy.
Standing guard over the dark house
as I do, but for better motives.

The small one's tiny hands
bunched into fists that hold nothing.
I don't understand how it is
we have learned to go on.

The sleep of trees is constant
and will not be threatened.

Almanac

Rilke said: there are only two words
and all the rest are misprints.
The guitar with one string
makes a strange music.

Looking at it a different way
poets speak very little
saving up their words for later use,
i.e. politicians make bad poets.

If you close one eye the other thinks it's alone
and sees only what it wants to see.
The tyranny of the poet.

Rilke said: green was one word
and the other didn't matter.
He held his hands over his eyes.

Folding Chairs

Truth is only part of what we must learn
before we die. I have been sadly misled

until this moment. I would gladly give up
one world for another: any world you choose

for the next, also of your choice.
But,

Truth is only part of what we must learn to forget
before we cease to go on living.

I hope I make myself clear.
I have not led a happy life.

Often, being alone
was enough

to leave permanent damage
where before my conscience had been clear:

a horse whose rider is asleep,
a shuffled deck of cards

with no particular game in mind.
That is why I have come here to speak to you tonight.

I am not the president of a great country. Neither am I
a famous philosopher who can speak freely

of what he believes and what he does not believe.
I am only the man you see before you now.

Truth has nothing to do with it.
And despite all you may say

to change my mind, I will never
give up my position

at the back of the auditorium.

The Experiment

In the bath
my legs are distorted by refraction.
As if I had looked down
and mistaken them
for the legs of the person sitting next to me.
When I lift them out of the water
they are mine again, familiar and mute.
I imagine this must be what it's like
to be in a wheelchair,
but quickly cross this out
as unnecessary and cruel.
Still, I repeat this experiment
several times — surprised
by my attention,
happy to have them return
each time.

After Visiting the Home of a Famous Poet

Just off the highway
behind a white picket fence
is the house.
“Home of the famous American poet”
says the sign out front
and that I believe.
Fame makes us respectable
whether we want it or not.
The house is closed today
but through the window
we can make out a table
with one sheet of paper
and a pen.
As if a vindictive maid
got tired of his ravings
and threw the whole lot out.

I want to lie
and say it is beautiful
but no one lives here now.
Cars rot out in the yard
of a house nearby
and down the street
is a Chinese restaurant
equally out of place.

As we are leaving
we spot another house
five miles down the road.
The windows are boarded up
and several hand painted signs say
trespassers will be shot.
Here is another American.
I want to stop and ask
if he knew the poet
who was his neighbor.
But that’s another lie.
I am tired of poetry
and this American means business.

Listening in the Dark

On evenings like this
I can hear the creaking of the oarlocks
on the boat the moon uses to row out to the horizon.

The woman I live with
is in the next room reading
and I will not disturb her.

It is a small sound
like a door left ajar
shifting in the wind.

It is impossible to tell how long I've been sitting here.
I know the moon is a dead thing
and moves without thought or feeling

but tonight I can believe
it is working, that moon,
to do what it has done a thousand times,

pulling into view.

from
A Life of Feasting

Morning. Blue Sky

The low nose of a hill
across the river

stands blue in the haze.

Morning. Blue sky
bleached white at the edges.

I am reciting

the mantra of what exists
out my front window,

humming the pine

and the spruce green,
the snow white, the earth suddenly brown...

Convincing myself

these are not
the same words I used yesterday.

I Love the Limbs of Women

I love
the limbs of women

that bend.
The folds

repeating themselves
like an old pair of jeans,

or a crease
where pink

is worn away.
Really, I love everything

about them.
But especially I love

those clean, well-used spaces
where what comes to rest is turned to light.

The Chinese Poets

The Chinese poets often wrote after climbing mountains
that surrounded their native villages.

Their poems were interrupted, like a sudden wind
catches sparrows offguard in high places.

Even in times of war, mountains
provide a necessary distance.

Those they loved could not be saved
by words anymore than by ransom.

In better times, bouts of drinking
accompanied any achievement.

And when the writing was done
they came back down into the village.

All done in a few lines
what now takes so many.

Reaching for the Light

Reaching for the light-
switch

as I leave the room
I have been
reading in,

tonight I expect
the light to go out
of my body
and absence, like a darkness
too small to be seen,
take my place.

Leaving the room
empty, silent

and brightly lit.

Variations on a Poem by Li Po

Drunkenly I rise to stalk the brook moon.

Drunk I rise, stalk brook moon.

Drunk
I rise
Stalk brook moon

Drunk I rise
Stalk brook,
Moon.

Drunk, rise, stalk,
Brook moon.

Rise.
Stalk.
Brook.

Drunk moon.

The Swimmer

Breathing the blue
measured gulps
of air

the swimmer stands still in the water

drawing
the end of the pool towards him
in a wide, sweeping motion.

At the wall he turns, kicks, and starts again
to pull the other end closer.

The
invisible
blue thread

of water
passing endlessly through his hands.

Reading Late at Night

Each shoosh of tire and road
represents

one life story
up to page 16 or so

that I have not read.

Driving home, or to work
the late shift

each car sounds like pages
turning rapidly

in the hands of a god
or a disinterested reader

asleep

whose lips move
but make no sound.

Nature Poem

That blob of green is *tree*.
And over there, that darker stuff

is *pine*, a special kind
I can identify. Other than that

they are all the same.
Although I always wanted to be able

to say “this is birch”,
good for reprimanding children

or “that one’s ash”, patron saint
of tree houses and campfires.

But for now, they are just *tree*:
the anonymous providers

that guard my house
and haunt the woods I walk in.

Story

Comb: veil

A parting of the ways
A way of parting

Entrance to the subway
A bicycle rack
Front grill of a '56 Ford pickup

A piano with the white keys removed

The forest (by night)
A funeral (by day)
A dilemma with too many choices

The loon, the thresher, the sieve
A crowd, a fence, a harp

The Acropolis

Rain with cloud (inverted)

Theoretical

Dislanguage me
with scissors, with picks
& shovels. Unman
the hands & delicate steering
that holds six-foot one
of me upright

without speech.
Leave the tongue to wag
& burn the body in sleep
like a Hindu bride. Make no bones

until every last thum
and flicker is ash,
and the ashes are ash again.
The crime is hidden and the wind speaks for itself.

Waking

It is pre-dawn.
Ghost time.

Before the alarm signals
the end of not being.

This is the moment after
the half-life
expires.

Seconds caught in the teeth
of a giant machine.

Primeval.

Before light.

I must slaughter a wild animal for meat
and weave cloth for my shirt
and tie.

Christmas

Christmas day: in a strange town
in an equally strange house
with relatives, stranger still.

Who invented this lesson
for the overly proud?

I sing, off-key,
to a battered phonograph
while others wrestle in the kitchen
with huge, stone-age utensils.

It is dark. It is late.
I am wearing a hideous sweater
that was knit by hand.
I am the luckiest man on earth.
There are none luckier.

Starting Over

I am starting over with a rock.
Nothing I have done has come out right.
So I am starting over with a rock
and the table the rock sits on. Forgive me.
I am thirty-one years old and married
with two cars and no children, but it is time
to start again. The rock says
I am not a harsh man. The rock
says I am still flesh and blood.
The rock, the table, and the chair I sit in
revolve around a central point
once every twenty-four hours.
If I leave the room
this will continue to happen.

They are Building a Box

They are building a box upstairs.
They are going to pack their dreams in it.
No, they are going to sail around the world
using an old shirt for a sail.

They have been working on the box for days.
Sometimes I see them
when they come downstairs for food
or to sleep. They are our neighbors.
They have lived here for six years
without showing any signs
of this latest obsession.

They are building a toy house for their youngest child.
They are robbing us blind.
The box will never be big enough.

The Daily News

The newspaper sings
the familiar songs

of death and tragedy.
I don't remember the words

from day to day

but the eluctable, one note
hums in it

like a sixty watt bulb.

No one I know died today.
Nothing I treasure was stolen or burnt.

It is a song of praise.
The rollcall of the surprised, the influenced, the apprehended.
And it is a song of joy

for the names that are missing.

Not Writing Political Poems

It is an act of courage

not writing political poems.

Not making speeches
every time the news comes on

or they interrupt the regularly scheduled
program.

The bulletins tell us
that we are a great country.
The bulletins tell us that we are in danger
or that danger was recently averted
by the men we employ

as our representatives.

The danger is over. Go back to your houses.

It is safe to cook dinner. Write poems about flowers or trees.

What Inches Down

What inches down
below the rime ice,
the snow crust?
Through the increasingly dark
halls of snow
what thread pulls loose
and digs the cold earth?
Not us, exposed
to the weather,
surviving but blown bare.
What gives
but takes hold?
Seed.
Root.

The Only Art

The only art I haven't mentioned
is music:

played by Terpsichore
handmaiden to Zeus
who plucked, naked
the lyre

ancient ancestor
to the modern day
zither, but with sweeter tongue
and fewer strings.

This I know from books
and other things
from life.
Let us pass on.

Introduction to Philosophy

Televisionary.

The ability to tell the future
the way the media will portray it.

Electricism.

Cult of the devout
believers in human radio transmission.

Deja loom.

Where images of the future are woven
on a loom so slowly, so meticulously
that the actual event occurs moments before
the tapestry is complete.

Vehicularists.

Beyond buses and trucks, we are riding
the continents, entire planets, with no one at the wheel!

Poem

I have a friend who's a poet
and who drinks too much.

He's a good poet.
He calls me up and tells me
the same stories night after night.
He lives in New York. He's a poet.
He drinks.
These facts

are unrelated.
But he goes on drinking,
he goes on living in New York,
and sometimes he writes.
One of these days

he'll stop.

Poolside

Women with large breasts
attract attention.

Other women

men, and family pets
stop what they are doing to stare
at the bathing suit that could.

The only people who are unaffected
are children diving for nickels
and pushing each other

into the pool.

The world revolves, momentarily

around her
and around her
the sinking coins gleam larger than life.

The Box

The box I live in
has changed.
The air is thinner,

more ethereal.
The walls are the same color:
black, but different
as when someone in another room
turns on a light.
I can hear music,

dinner arrives late
and is more appetizing when it finally does.

Something is up.
I put my ear to the wall.

I hear a rustling in a paper bag.

We Want Everything We Do

We want everything we do
to be music.

Not *like* music
which casts the illusion of grace,
but music

with each note in place
and the beautiful instruments
polished and finely tuned.

When we wash the dishes,
when we sweep the floor
we want the music to rise

with the dust and dance
in the lapping water, moved
to a rhythm of its own design.

The Ancient Philosophers

Pythagoras says: don't give offense to the sun.
Good advice.

Hesiod says: don't urinate in plain view.
Similar, but more direct.

I am attracted to the beauty of fine speech.
To the homily that improves character
and cures social ills.
Especially, the dead

and great writers
make me think there is good
in mankind. They also remind us

that some people haven't learned anything
in two thousand years,

as Critias predicted.

Islands

Temples. Greeks. White columns
like towels hung out to dry.
The clean, regular folds
carved into stone.

And the background is painted blue.
The sky: blue.
The sea: blue.
Even the outline of mountains
on distant islands: blue
in the haze.

The ghosts of ancient philosophers
roam the grounds nudging the sparse grass
back to life, or to be eaten,
come back as goats.

Ideas of You

I am in love
with the being
in love.

The measured pause
between ooh and aah

scientists use to calibrate their instruments.

I am in love
with too many

ideas of you
and must tie myself
to the bed we use

as proof: you are here

each morning I stagger into the world
stripped of dreams but living.

Simplicity vs. the Mind

Simplicity vs. the mind.

The opera: complete

with brightly-clad bearers,
singers, dancers, and slaves
reduced

to a few bars
whistled intermittently
by the waitress

serving me lunch.

She doesn't stop

even when I ask
for an extra napkin and a clean glass.

Now that's art.
That's fucking beauty.

Life With Fish & Birds

The brook says things
no one understands
which is why it repeats itself,

its soft tongue tripping over the vowels
that water contains.

Occulant with trees,
married to Winter,

the brook carries the hillside
downstream

in tiny cupfuls.

Shush! The pine siskin won't stop talking.
Brother Squirrel is at his prayers.

All is well with the world.
All is well.

Bad Dog

What many of us want
to be when we grow up.
Out from under

the raised fists and loud voices
that threaten,
cajole.

Sniffing around any tree
we please.

Whose life is this, anyway?

In our hearts we all want
just once, to stand
in our own ill-doings. Deaf

to the admonitions of failed training:
Bad dog! Bad dog!

My Wife Watches Movies in Her Sleep

My wife watches movies in her sleep.
I am not supposed to disturb her.

Not dreams. Movies. On television.

She plans this days in advance.
Checking the *TV Guide* for late shows.
Asking me to watch them with her.

When the night arrives, we go to bed.
Turn on the tv. And she sleeps.

I know she is asleep. Her eyes are closed
and she does not answer to her name.

But she is watching.

I don't understand it. But experience
has taught me. I cannot turn off the tv.

Or she will never know how it all ends.

Everlasting

For a few seconds
I thought I understood.

The job
of making useless objects
to sell to people who do not need them

(for which I am paid handsomely)

made no more sense, but fit
into a larger scheme of things.

I was happy.
My wife was happy.
My neighbor's dog

barked and chased his tail.

In another life
another life would be needed.

New Poems

Buddha in the Bathtub

Buddha in the bathtub,
Tibet on my knee.
The water slowly rising
like a thousand devoted followers.

He is less than one, but more than many
blessing the orphans of the kitchen sink,
the knives and forks waiting their turn
quietly, on the impromptu shore.

The Ganges, the Tigris,
the sacred waters of *Splish-Splash*
where cows, those larger gods,
rest their muzzy chins
on their own reflections.

He kicks the side of the plastic bucket with glee.
There is no joy deeper than this.

The Self, Returning

Across the fields
in late morning
with the fog rising
like the aspirations of the grass.
Ankle high, white as ghosts,
it comes.

Sinker

It's the pitch
approaching
slower
than physics would allow

only to drop
out of reach of a
perfectly timed bottom of the ninth
out of the park grand slam.

Bamboozled by the obvious,

you begin to doubt your senses.
If you could see it coming (you ask)
why didn't you get out of the way?

You are the happy victim.
One minute, walking down the street
the next minute, ecstatic.

There's no excuse
for the pastimes of the smallest creatures:

the fisherman, sitting in a boat
alert and unrewarded
long after common sense calls him in

and the fish who hears the splash,
sees the gaudy improbable lure,
knows better, but swallows it

hook line and

Fragment

Light goes wrong
thinking about you.

Tribal

for Malcolm

Other than an occasional grunt
he is quiet. Clear-headed.

Involved

in a world of large shapes
and bright colors.

Hands circle but never close
on anything solid
for more than a few seconds.

The universe is anchored
to 9lbs and 21 inches

of being,
all being.
Need and desire

learning a single language
containing a single word.

“Going to Ruin is Silent Work”

So I must be doing something wrong.
I can hardly hear myself think,
going from bad to worse.
Everyday a mirror breaks
or a sidewalk cracks
loudly. The neighbors complain.
We complain in return.
Going from unhappy to miserable
everyone's making too much noise
to do it properly.
So each day we start over,
clinking our chipped glasses
of orange juice
over the smoldering toast and spilt coffee...

Better Living

“The learned pig did not learn its letters in a day”

It takes two days to teach a pig to read,
three days for a dog to talk,
four days for the family cat to drive a stickshift,
etc.

In one week, the need for fossil fuel is solved.
In a month, gravity itself is overcome.
In three months, we can send fruit into the future
to avoid spoiling, as assurance against times of famine.

One year from today
my shoes will tie themselves
and carry me to my job
which has already been completed
but gives me something to do,
traveling back and forth day after day...

Entrances & Exits

I have come to realize
these entrances and exits
work both ways.
Birth is the end
of a long voyage
in the dark, in a boat
a few inches shorter than the ocean
that holds it afloat.
And death, the beginning
of something else.
Again, in the dark
like the start of a long car ride
begun before dawn
with the children
still in their PJ's
unaware
of the destination.