**‘A slumber did my spirit seal’**

A slumber did my spirit seal,

I had no human fears:

She seemed a thing that could not feel

The touch of earthly years.

No motion has she now, no force;

She neither hears nor sees;

Rolled round in earth’s diurnal course,

With rocks, and stones, and trees!

—William Wordsworth

**Man Carrying Thing**

The poem must resist the intelligence

Almost successfully. Illustration:

A brune figure in winter evening resists

Identity. The thing he carries resists

The most necessitous sense. Accept them, then,

As secondary (parts not quite perceived

Of the obvious whole, uncertain particles

Of the certain solid, the primary free from doubt,

Things floating like the first hundred flakes of snow

Out of a storm we must endure all night,

Out of a storm of secondary things),

A horror of thoughts that suddenly are real.

We must endure our thoughts all night, until

The bright obvious stands motionless in cold.

—Wallace Stevens

**Welsh Incident**

‘But that was nothing to what things came out

From the sea-caves of Criccieth yonder’

‘What were they? Mermaids? dragons? ghosts?’

‘Nothing at all of any things like that.’

‘What were they, then?’

      ‘All sorts of queer things,

Things never seen or heard or written about,

Very strange, un-Welsh, utterly peculiar

Things. Oh, solid enough they seemed to touch,

Had anyone dared it. Marvellous creation,

All various shapes and sizes and no sizes,

All new, each perfectly unlike his neighbour,

Though all came moving slowly out together.’

‘Describe just one of them.’

‘I am unable.’

‘What were  their colours?’

‘Mostly nameless colours,

Colours you would like to see; but one was puce

Or perhaps more like crimson, but not purplish.

Some had no colour.’

   ‘Tell me, had they legs?’

‘Not a leg nor foot among them that I saw.’

‘But did these things come out in any order?

What o’clock was it? What was the day of the week?

Who else was present?  How was the weather?’

‘I was coming to that. It was half past three

On Easter Tuesday last. The sun was shining.

The Harlech Silver band played *Marchog Jesu*

On thirty-seven shimmering instruments,

Collecting for Caernarvon’s (Fever) Hospital Fund.

The populations of Pwllheli, Criccieth,

Portmadoc, Borth, Tremadoc, Penrhyndeudraeth,

Were all assembled.  Criccieth’s mayor addressed them

First in good Welsh and then in fluent English,

Twisting his fingers in his chain of office,

Welcoming the things. They came out on the sand,

Not keeping time to the band, moving seaward

Silently at a snail’s pace. But at last

The most odd, indescribable thing of all,

Which hardly one man there could see for wonder,

Did something recognisably a something.’

‘Well, what?’

                   ‘It made a noise.’

‘A frightening noise?’

‘No, no.’

     ‘A musical noise? A noise of scuffling?’

‘No, but a very loud, respectable noise—

Like groaning to oneself on Sunday morning

In chapel, close before the second psalm.’

‘What did the mayor do?’

                          ‘I was coming to that.’

—Robert Graves

**Interior (With Jane)**

The eagerness of objects to  
be what we are afraid to do

cannot help but move us      Is  
this willingness to be a motive

in us what we reject?       The   
really stupid things, I mean

a can of coffee, a 35¢ ear  
ring, a handful of hair, what

do these things do to us?       We  
come into the room, the windows

are empty, the sun is weak  
and slippery on the ice        And a

sob comes, simply because it is  
coldest of the things we know

—Frank O’Hara

**The House at Sagg**

The way the physical things add up,

The plain practical shapes of them derive

A mounting architecture in which the minutes

Reach for footing, solid enough

To hold them down. Our bodies, of course, but also

The space they agitate in a just right bed,

The doorways that make you stoop and the ones that don’t,

The advantages of a sunken living room:

These things push the living in or out of shape

And, like the climber rose on the trellis,

It longs to contend with them. The simple things

(The heat of the water in the tap) exist,

And in their measurements is a way for the living

To emulate their still extent. Properly put together,

The things we touch are announced in the ones we do:

The driveway, built of pebbles, rattles accordance

With how and how often it’s disturbed. Beautiful,

Our actions depend on finding their objects

And growing around them

Until one or the other is forced to bloom.

—Douglas Crase