**Love in A Life**

I

Room after room,

I hunt the house through

We inhabit together.

Heart, fear nothing, for, heart, thou shalt find her—

Next time, herself!—not the trouble behind her

Left in the curtain, the couch’s perfume!

As she brushed it, the cornice-wreath blossomed anew:

Yon looking-glass gleamed at the wave of her feather.

II

Yet the day wears,

And door succeeds door;

I try the fresh fortune—

Range the wide house from the wing to the centre.

Still the same chance! she goes out as I enter.

Spend my whole day in the quest,—who cares?

But ’tis twilight, you see,—with such suites to explore,

Such closets to search, such alcoves to importune!

—Robert Browning

**On the Move**

The blue jay scuffling in the bushes follows

Some hidden purpose, and the gust of birds

That spurts across the field, the wheeling swallows,

Has nested in the trees and undergrowth.

Seeking their instinct, or their poise, or both,

One moves with an uncertain violence

Under the dust thrown by a baffled sense

Or the dull thunder of approximate words.

On motorcycles, up the road, they come:

Small, black, as flies hanging in heat, the Boys,

Until the distance throws them forth, their hum

Bulges to thunder held by calf and thigh.

In goggles, donned impersonality,

In gleaming jackets trophied with the dust,

They strap in doubt – by hiding it, robust –

And almost hear a meaning in their noise.

Exact conclusion of their hardiness

Has no shape yet, but from known whereabouts

They ride, direction where the tyres press.

They scare a flight of birds across the field:

Much that is natural, to the will must yield.

Men manufacture both machine and soul,

And use what they imperfectly control

To dare a future from the taken routes.

It is a part solution, after all.

One is not necessarily discord

On earth; or damned because, half animal,

One lacks direct instinct, because one wakes

Afloat on movement that divides and breaks.

One joins the movement in a valueless world,

Choosing it, till, both hurler and the hurled,

One moves as well, always toward, toward.

A minute holds them, who have come to go:

The self-defined, astride the created will

They burst away; the towns they travel through

Are home for neither bird nor holiness,

For birds and saints complete their purposes.

At worst, one is in motion; and at best,

Reaching no absolute, in which to rest,

One is always nearer by not keeping still.

 —Thom Gunn

**Keeping Things Whole**

In a field

I am the absence

of field.

This is

always the case.

Wherever I am

I am what is missing.

When I walk

I part the air

and always

the air moves in

to fill the spaces

where my body’s been.

We all have reasons

for moving.

I move

to keep things whole.

 —Mark Strand

**it’s not that I want to say**

It’s not that I want to say that poetry is disconnected from having

something to say; it’s just that everything I want to say eludes me. But if I

caught it I wouldn’t want it and you wouldn’t want it either. Maybe poetry

is what happens on the bus between wanting and having. I used to think it

was what happened on the bus between oakland and berkeley. And it was,

too, like violet texas in people voices, all kinda subtle transmission broke

off by stops and bells, repercussive riding, mobile contact, slow symposium.

Now, even in the absence of my office, I still want to move and so I have

to move but never get there in this whole extended region of not being

there, of stopping and saying not here, not here, and of that being, in the

end, pretty much all I have to say. What I want to say is that having

something to say is subordinate in the work of being true to the social life

in somebody else’s sound and grammar, its placement in my head, my

placement in the collective head as it moves on down the line. The

itinerant ensemble arrangement of the 40, and sometimes of the 15, is

where I started studying how to live in poetry. I want to transfer study as a

practice of revision on the edge, where ethics and aesthetics are in parallel

play. Some kind of homeless shift between reading and writing that

emerges in a set as our cut-up schedule, a willow’s diverse list of things,

point to point restlessness, interlocking schemes of material breaks, the

constantly renewed syllabus of a new composers guild in the middle of

enjoying itself. What we come together to try to do starts to look like what

we do when we come together to enjoy ourselves, handing saying what we

want for one another to one another in and out of words.

 —Fred Moten

**The Wake Off the Ferry**

Where we’ve

just been what

we just

did just

now the

disturbance of

our having

gone

there and by

there which

closes up

again but

never again

exactly the

same when I

love

you as you

me never again

are we the ones

we love I look

as far as I

can see to see

it close

back up

to see it rebecome

itself

—Jorie Graham