

6. The House

for Nadia

There is no need to talk about the light.
The solid mountains blow about the gate,
young cats and yellow frogs in the rosemary
are still, meticulous. (Our tree
promised mulberries, but three weeks late.)
An owl nearby ticks night.

We've climbed very slowly up the hill
where the asphodel flower like quotations
from a poem we never quite understood.
The beach was crosshatched with driftwood,
stippled with reeds. There are other creations
round us; first drafts of spiders on the sill.

In this bay within a bay times drift through the pines:
the watering-lady in the garden floats
breaststroke out of lumps of marble or walls
frescoed under whitewash. When the owl calls
she vanishes, leaving stout black petticoats
nodding over the roses, pruning vines.