

## *Inventory*

White walls and ceilings; a pallor of wood;  
light from no quarter, as broad as it's wide;

daylight—not daylight, but everything else;  
two shapes on the bed, one true and one false;

the quiet of clock-time repeating itself  
on steel-clear mirrors on no one's behalf

but for everyone's good, while the work goes on  
with nobody here, or you here alone

to take down the names from a brilliant wall,  
to polish and burnish, and not bewail

the uncountable dead, with their elegies spun  
thinly to nothing, and bleached to oblivion,

though not on your time. Categories shift  
where the strips of beech-wood are whited and stiff,

and light at no angle gives no quarter  
to glasses or blinds or shadows on plaster

as letters come round in backwards reflection,  
jumbled, untouchable, sometimes uncertain,

with particulars glaring; the fall of a sparrow;  
the bringing together of technique and sorrow.

## *As Seen*

The house of stone,  
too visible  
in its one field,  
dumb as a sign  
you see for miles,

without a purpose  
or a purpose long  
gone, not known,  
is always now  
no home to us

now home is gone,  
like the last field  
of stone and clover,  
and there's no sign  
of us, or for us,

in that place, where  
the visible ground  
rises for miles,  
then without purpose  
it goes down

beneath the horizon  
to pitch and turn  
with an invisible  
cargo of bodies  
that pitch and turn

and that run rings  
around the sky  
till dusk or dawn  
(no more than in  
the way of things),

so no one sees  
except ourselves  
the dark and plain  
lights in a mesh  
of wires for miles

and in desperation  
we force ourselves  
to our bare flesh  
again, and again  
in desperation

as a dumb sign,  
but miles away;  
the tangled cry  
not ours, not known;  
the house of clay.