

## *Serpent*

I was pent up.  
I lived in a penthouse—a rental—  
Bent to its bays with sediment,  
Newsprint, lint, effluents, sentiment.  
Fruit flies swarmed the box.  
A history of meat repeated itself  
In a radio's cadence in the flowing  
Freestanding Oriental tub  
I got a good scrubbing in.  
Then came an agent, sent  
Up by the super to serve  
Landlordly papers in a language I glanced  
At but no more gathered  
Than a tree gathered  
Its debarking.  
For I was the elder pentathlete  
Of the premises,  
Spent  
Occupant of a pair of parking slots  
For a trio of unrepentant engines,  
Wondering where my long welcome went.  
My man has snapped utilities off  
For punishment overdue,  
For guilty I am  
Of radiant sentience,  
Having lived by the people I was born by  
Taken from and lived without  
A demi-century and meant it.  
A trove of transient fact  
Will thaw with me  
Lamentably in spring  
Coming.  
I am losing my hold, old broom;  
Not knowing where to sweep.