

Five Poems · *Jane Kenyon*

BREAKFAST AT THE MOUNT WASHINGTON HOTEL

In the valley a warm spring rain. . .
Mount Washington, blue, but with snow
still gleaming in the ravines,
looks equably down on the old hotel,
which is painted white, and on dreary days
seems to emit light. Its long porch,
weathered like the deck of a ship, proffers
empty wicker rocking chairs
madly ajog in the mizzly breeze.

At the turn of the century
those who arrived by motorcar
came to a separate entrance,
so the horses on the bridlepaths
would not be frightened. All very grand. . .
and by now slightly shabby
in a European way.

Only the young—just married, and looking
shyly down—or the prosperous stay here.
We are the anomaly.
The waiter comes with coffee. . .the cups
are large, and thin at the edge. In the easy
silence of our twelfth anniversary
we look out at the mountain. Swallows dip
and tilt under the portico. After all
it's time for them
to choose a mate and build a nest. . . .

A tense man in a three-piece suit
sets out round metal tables in the rain.
Everything is in place. After Memorial Day
the real summer season will begin.