

Door · *Paul Engle*

I walk around with a door in my hands.

It opens in all directions.
Whenever I want to go through,
I gently open it with my key.
The key is lovingly notched like a liar's tongue.
It turns without a sound at the softest touch.
Without the key, I would have to throw away my door.
In my pocket, the key beats like a living heart.

Sometimes I hear growling on the other side.
I never find a dog there.

Sometimes I hear weeping.
I never find a woman there.

Sometimes I hear rain.
Nothing is ever wet there.

Sometimes I smell fire.
Never smoke. Nothing burns there.

Sometimes I even knock on the door myself.
My key caresses the lock.
I never find myself there.

Sometimes the door is hard to hold,
wanting to run away,
haunted by its memory of hinges.

I hear a small sound, and one more time
I put the patient key in the lock.
The door trembles as it opens:

A boy's shadow grieves on the bare ground.
When I start to close the door,
its dark hand reaches toward me.
I bang the door on the hand.