

TWENTY-FOUR HOURS

My own happiness seems unimportant.
I say, *seems*.
I wouldn't lie to you.
I'm not the one
without food or shelter.
I wouldn't run a knife across your back
until you asked for my forgiveness.
My own happiness is a room
with no windows
and an open door.
Every morning I close my eyes
and face east.
To my amazement, which the years
have dulled,
the sun rises.
It takes all day
and all night.
But sometimes I get it in my head
that twenty-four hours
is one moment of despair,
in which my front tires
kiss the squirrel
and I, with everywhere to go,
veer off the mountain road
and begin the descent back.