

AFTER TU FU (*They Say You're Staying
in a Mountain Temple*)

In the damp evenings of summertime,
I cannot trust my words to reach you.
They drink up every nuance shamelessly.
They are more ravenous than my mouth calling.

In the crusty air of wintertime,
I cannot trust my words to go to you.
They see too well the leafless trees.
They know too well the outcome of love.

In the steady dying of autumn times,
there I know that my words will touch you.
Fall is the shadow season, when we meet
on the other side of the clouds.

A DREAM . . . OR WAS IT?

After a certain time, an uncertain time
occurs. It is in the dark, on the other side
of midnight, and the wide chairs
sit reading, books between them on the table,
and the good lamp in the middle looking
benevolently down. A couch reclines.
Its resting is a windless ripple in the air.

The walls of the house that kept a line
from corner to corner draw slightly inside.
They circle the places we were. Upstairs
they go with hardly a break to cradle
us asleep in bedrooms we have been taking
in stride. Granted, things are usually fine.
When the mind leaves the brain—that's scary.