

My father is gone.
It is no longer now,
it is thousands of years
before man existed,
the horizon strangely red
and burning.

THE STORY OF OUR LIVES

for Arlen and Fran Gangwish

The buzzing of flies
over a carcass.

The promise of life
in the seed and the rain and the soil.

Every morning our eyes
come to rest on the horizon.

Such a large sky full of emptiness,
clouds heavy with air and floating water.

These are our children growing
ever closer to leaving.

Nothing so near as distance.

THE REASON FOR POETRY

There are only two chickens left now
since the wild dogs got done with them.
They don't seem to care, those that remain,
cooing in the coop with a tank full of water
and cracked corn they couldn't finish in a season.
I'll never get over how real the world is
and yet, how easily it disappears,

each bale of straw dissolving
on the earthen floor of the pig stall.
Every animal known to man
sheds its body like a coat
when the time comes, while man
continually prays for a new one.
What he always gets

is another morning,
with the same trees
and the same wind
in its branches. For
as long as he can tell, he was in love
and he was dying—his flesh and bone,
his brain and heart and bowels.