

SOMEWHERE IN A HOUSE WHERE YOU ARE NOT

There is sunlight coming through windows
somewhere in a house where you are not.

An old man and old woman eating breakfast
to the sound of the clock, out of words,

empty of thoughts, but for who died this year
and of what. If you follow the sun to that house

you will find the long lost driveway
that no highway intersects, the loose gravel

crackling under your wheels, the sun breaking
cleanly free of a horizon. You must park.

You must come to an absolute halt
outside the house where you are not,

letting your many necessary miles drop
from your bones like dust. Sit and wait.

Do not fear the mop-faced dog. He pounds
his tail for you. He is uninterested

in your tires. This old woman will soon come,
peeking through the ancient blinds, saying,

who on earth, and seeing your face
will hold out her hands, warm and soft

as good black dirt, and take you inside,
the house filling with your arrival,

the old man smiling his surprised skeleton smile,
the old woman asking, have you come far,

was it a long drive, are you hungry, are you
tired, to which you may answer, yes

and lie down in the bed they have kept
empty in your absence, reserved for the day

you would need this room full of nothing,
but rare morning light, and the stroke

of an old brown hand, inviting you
to rest, to sleep, to feel the earth

revolve slowly around and around
without you.

Debra Marquart