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Departure

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POETRY

FOUR POEMS

DEPARTURE

In this quotidian of my setting out
I fumble at the latch and hesitate
Before my froward shadow on the step
Blotting the sprawling sunlight from the stone.

There was a time when I would not have gone
Beyond this door, when sorrow's tentacles
Were strong as hemp. (And what grave image there
Was hoist for matins in that darkened hall.)

Pressed by impedimenta-freighted brain
Resilient tendons dared not stretch. Prostrate
On polished timbers mummied time aroused
No horror of the rodent hours. But now

Departure-chastened, desuetude propounds
New formulae for taking leave. Upon
The threshold I have paused to give entail
And benediction to my termite heirs.

FOUL CONJUNCTION

O foul conjunction joining this bright soul
With carrion-food for worms—no sacrament
Hallowed this tainted marriage making whole
Two ones; rather carnivorous sediment,
Earth's belly (womb and tomb!) awaits return
Of flesh and bone. As surely as that proud