

Jim Simmerman

LONG DISTANCE BICKERING (DAY RATE)

Preposterous to brood so late into love
and at such distance ("falling" thirty-two
feet per second per sec—). A few uncalled-
for words hurrying across the continent
via Schenectadys of circumlocution, already
outraced by a punctual globe, a handspin
shy of darkness or the long face of rain
(whence breaks a rumbling, neither of
disconsolate god, nor arpeggio come tardy
of illumination). How far into notion
the words spill, tailing the lightning
stab of innuendo across a protracted
gape—infinite bones to pick, infinite
points of departure riddling the heart.

WEATHER AT SEA

—for Donald Justice

The night is black as only night can be,
And quiet, like a rain that's ceased to fall.
The fishing boats go out upon the sea.

A boatman turns his salt-burned face alee
And blinks his eyelids, eyelids of a doll.
The night is black as only night can be.

The night is black and dreamlong like a key
Turned, and turned again, and then let fall.
The fishing boats go out upon the sea.

Dark the corridors down which they flee.
Still the water, weary sleeper's shawl.
The night is black as only night can be.
The fishing boats go out upon the sea.