

*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.