Farmer, Retired

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*This poem is from* Love Makes The Air Light, *W. W. Norton, 1965.*

A man under the town clock
on Main Street loiters
before a bucket of lilies
gracing the drugstore entry,
ever told they are plastic.

He can smell them: heady as plowed earth
or fluted lettuce a housewife tended
or even pears plunking outside the bedroom.
He is a tintype, still unfooled
so long as bees keep their appointment in his blood.

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—Elkader Register
May 11, 1893