

SAN FRANCISCO STAR

for George

Something changed tonight as I lay next to you,
struggling for sobriety, home from San Francisco.

We move now from romance to finance
and the regularity of house payments.

Your old dog howls outside our closed door
waiting for strokes and your first lover
wades through new hours in contemplation
of our marriage and a lifestyle unchosen.

We left the violent rhythm of the Presidio surf
and windy beachfront where you and Dagley
poked through grains of sand like so many grains of time
in search of red, amber, and green bits of glass
children call jewels. I stood apart,
balanced on a pier, high winds chopping at my back,
absorbed in waves, whitecaps, and the deep
wondering how our children will look.

We have moved through cycles together, you
exorcising a heartless lover, me cutting teeth
on old philosophers in a new Catholic faith,
and Dagley, reeling from two lovers dead by AIDS,
surrenders you, his last grip on childhood, to me
as we fall to the status of "token straights."
Tonight there is no love for us to make
that we have not made throughout our lives.