

MARK COX

After Rain

Sometimes, night quieted,
what's real soaks in further;
the mesh screens gemmed by halogen,
my neighbors' doorbell switch
like a moon within reach,
the lilies nodding on their stems
like exhausted horsemen.
Denied the old illusion of ownership,
I have opened somehow,
but for once, nothing is leaving or lessened.

The journey is long.
The journey is not long.
Moths drink their fill at the screens,
the caught rain glistening.
What conscious moment
is not, in essence, worship;
what state more vulnerable
than the attentive mind upturned?

We bear forth our sparks, from psychic fire,
each family a series of contained blazes,
each patio torch a signal pyre,
our longing eternal,
and though the skin thins,
our inner lives grow cold,
there is always this black frock
nightfall offers—

the comfort, finally,
of tenderness and humility and weakness,
the calm after rain
and before the slate's clearing.