

## *STATISTIC*

Half the marriages break up  
 before the thirteenth year. Gone:  
 the calypso that once played.  
 Gone: the grace of the marimbas,  
 the steel drums in the straight-away.  
 On our honeymoon, what did we know  
 of the perpetual trellis that raising  
 children is, the consistent drench  
 of monthly bills, life  
 insurance, memberships, and the requisite  
 home repairs, a better screw gun,  
 the better tub of gunk  
 to strip the buildup in the space  
 between oven and vent. It has  
 taken me twenty years to discover  
 cracks in my apparent happiness,  
 my own capacity for cowardice,  
 all my petty exits. Still  
 I am amazed when she sets the table  
 with our wedding silver,  
 fills the centerpiece with mangos,  
 kumquats, kiwis that open like geodes,  
 papayas and Medjool  
 dates, lustful and clustered,  
 and I am happy again  
 just to watch her breathe  
 just to watch her  
 knit. The clicking needles turn  
 some boundless timeline  
 into thousands of closures  
 and openings, so that marriage may  
 put on its sweater,



go out into the world—  
 no weeping unwept  
 nor any laughter unlaughed,  
 though of course there are  
 roadblocks and holdbacks,  
 so many pitfalls—  
 and it will return, for we are  
 lock and lock bolt, cup  
 and saucer. Everything completed.