CURTAIN

First her, always there, like

the air I breathed. Seeing

her that morning, a shell,

empty of all that inhabited it,

I passed into another place,

where those precious

souls who flowed through

my life are ebbing away.

There was the dinner we had

with him, listening to his stories

of trekking and climbing,

marking his vitality. The next day

his wife at the door, not believing,

saying, “he just passed away.”

My friend, whose joy and laughter

was his imprimatur, hid a darkness

no one knew. Climbing to the roof

he threw himself over the edge,

ending the secret that gave him

flight without wings. How do we

miss really knowing each other?

The dandelion begins as a burst

of yellow, giving way to a halo of

pale seeds. One day the wind takes

them all, leaving only a tall stalk

no resemblance to that pale fire.

Losses come, constant as the

tide, marking my life by those

disappearing from it. The thought

“I could go too” forming when

once I never considered it. Living

without the net I never knew I had.

When a river wanes, it dries inward

from its banks, rocks and driftwood

beached, white and desolate. Soon

only a pool remains in the sand

then it sinks too. A ditch in the land

marks where it was. We go that way

too, every parting a new fissure, what

had been there now a new thing.