

Suicide Watch

by Bill Yarrow

"I lingered before her stall, though
I knew my stay was useless..."
--"Araby"

I watched my friends check
 out the scene, check
 out their options, check
 out their futures, check
 out of the market of the world

The ghosts of my companions
 haunt the Crum woods
 the bell tower, the windy
 gallery, the reddened rooms
 of learning to wait

What else has life got
 to offer the living? Nothing
 is gained by remembering
 the oranges of that time,
 the sapphire mystery

And the dark dogs of dreaming—
 where do they figure in the absence?
 One part of a hand is missing,
 missing from the dark
 face of a lost watch

What does the future hold?

Hands. The hands of a watch.
My father gave me a watch
but I misplaced it. My mother
searched for it her whole life.

What is a whole life? An insect
limping back to the nest. All his
insect friends are there: Brian the bee
without a wing. Sam the ant sans
antenna. Betsy Beetle, carapace cracked.

It's good to be home.
It's good to be home.
It's very good to be home
where we can linger
before the useless stalls.

