

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.

