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## Calling in the Experts

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## CALLING IN THE EXPERTS

Earth tremors dismember the dead  
and splinter their skulls.  
Molten rock no longer cools  
and porpoises conspire against us.

But you know none of this.  
You're at home to receive the plumber  
who enters through the back door,  
not bothering to knock.  
He crawls beneath the sink  
and for a moment forgets  
the purpose of his tools.  
The leak appears natural  
as it would in a limestone cavern.

As he crouches in thought,  
staring at his calloused hands,  
there's an awful thud in the apartment  
upstairs. You imagine  
the ceiling will buckle and collapse.

The plumber tells you his heart is bad  
and that he's too old to tamper  
with problems like yours.  
Maybe you'd better just live with it.  
On the way out his trick knee slips  
under his weight.  
He falls hard on the concrete  
but doesn't make a stink  
or threaten to sue.

Later in the night you hear  
the drip in the kitchen.  
Dreams leak slowly from your sleep  
and trickle through the floor boards  
to the cellar.  
Tomorrow the exterminator will come.  
You'll know him by the warts on his face  
and the smell of his poison.  
At this very moment he's awake, planning,  
testing his traps on the invisible beasts  
that gnaw his nerves.