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Sleeping Together

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SLEEPING TOGETHER

“. . . to airy thinness beat.”

—John Donne, “A Valediction Forbidding Mourning”

The woman who entered our bedroom last night
moved quietly. I could only hear
your methodic breath
as she touched you.

This morning when you awoke,
the skin on your thigh crackling,
you thought, perhaps, of lost youth.
You showered, as usual.
I had been gone already for two hours.

You thought how we share only the darkness,
the air we breathe; sometimes we both ride
a dark horse, our purpose.
This seems enough.

But the sleep we share too is a golden,
revolving globe, each night beaten thin, stretched,
our world so expanded. At the farthest ends,
in niches, we are recluses
whether we like it or not;
the underbrush
is too thick to cut, and the animals!
Often we see only their eyes . . . and women,
men burst full grown from the trees
they have been imprisoned in!

A man visited me last night.
I know you could barely hear him,
you, miles away with your woman.
I imagined our golden sighs
burst at the same liquid moment

as we slept, our curled bodies
facing opposite directions.