



### **Front of House**

There's a lot to be said for solidity.

If I could have my life over again  
I'd act it out in a midland town house,  
straight lines, dull grey, self-confident,  
going nowhere, among brown furniture  
and the seventeen portraits of myself,  
behind robust walls and nine-paned wooden windows.

Just before the sun set I'd close the house  
curtains, light fires and lamps in every room  
so that distraught passers-by, lost souls,  
could relish, in rain and sleet and snow,  
the dependable benediction of the  
slow chimney smoke and the oil lamps' orange glow.

And I could sit there, reciting, ignore  
the radio weather warnings, no gale  
likely to throw down my pots, no rain  
likely to penetrate my slated roof,  
wait for a knock on the door, greet  
the first ghost from the debris of the travelling show.  
There's a lot to be said for solidity.

Michael Farry, Meath, Ireland