

Seen Through a Window

By David Ferry

A man and a woman are sitting at a table.
It is supper time. The air is green. The walls
Are white in the green air, as rocks under water
Retain their own true color, though washed in green.
I do not know either the man or the woman,
Nor do I know whatever they know of each other.
Though washed in my eye they keep their own true color.

The man is all his own hunched strength, the body's
Self and strength, that bears, like weariness,
Itself upon itself, as a stone's weight
Bears heavily on itself to be itself.
Heavy the strength that bears the body down.
And the way he feeds is like a dreamless sleep.
The dreaming of a stone is how he feeds.

The woman's arms are plump, mottled a little
The flesh, like standing milk, and on one arm
A blue bruise, got in some household labor or other,
Flowering in the white. Her staring eye,
Like some bird's cry called from some deepest wood,
Says nothing of what it is but what it is.
Such silence is the bird's cry of the stone.

Source: *Poetry* (July 2011)