

# 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)



David Ferry was born in Orange, New Jersey. He served in the Air Force for three years and became sergeant before matriculating at Amherst College, where he earned a BA, and then continuing at Harvard where he earned a PhD. After graduating, Ferry began teaching at Wellesley College, where he was a member of the faculty for over fifty years. Well-known as a translator of some of the world's major works of poetry, he is also a prize-winning poet in his own right, including the 2011 Ruth Lilly Poetry Prize from the Poetry Foundation.