

David Walker

Fishing The Maze

In the long cast it all comes round:
the line curves out beyond the reach of eye
or ear — almost beyond
what the wrist believes. . . .

 Yet *steady, steady*
a voice keeps whispering;
 and all
my senses ground, bracing against that pull
in discipline and love, that lean to land
their strangest catch of sound.

The Fire in Winter

(for Frances)

In the shed, grey afternoons,
my ax-arms swing steadily
as a metronome;
 then stack
the dry flame of split cherry,
wavering fibre of yellow
birch: the less sap the better,
for what we need comes desiccate,
dead-ripe for clinker.

 My task's
to live our thrift, to prove
each chore's expense of motion
is also warmth.

 Love, clear
as the cold, come find me: layer
after layer of outdoor gear
peeling, as I work back
to the skinny quickness you chose
in summer:

 your totem-man,
provider, bearing in all
the kindling in the world to keep
you warm as a pot—
 as good
to savor for reward.

An Early Evening in Late Summer

1

After I've gone past
their fear, the crickets once more
strike up behind me.

2

But what remains: cold
road of moonlight, how closely
you follow the day!

3

One red leaf, fallen
in my path: it's still August,
I'll walk around it.

4

My life half over,
I listen with the half year . . .
next full moon, a frost.