

# QUESTIONS OF TRAVEL

There are too many waterfalls here; the crowded streams  
and the pressure of so many clouds on the mountaintops  
—motion,

—For if those streaks, those mile-long shiny tearstains  
in a quick age or so, as ages go here,  
they probably will be.  
But if the streams and clouds keep travelling, travelling,  
the mountains look like the bulls of censized shins  
slime-bung and barnacled

Think of the long trip home.  
Where should we be today?

in this strangest of theatres?  
What childishness is it that while there's a breath of life  
in our bodies, we are determined to rush  
The tiniest green hummingbird in the world?  
inexplicable  
instantly seen and always, always delightful?  
Oh, must we dream our dreams  
and have them, too?  
And have we room  
for one more folded sunset still quite warm?

not to have seen the sun rise, things a bit  
really exaggerated in their beauty  
not to have seen them capturing  
like noble pantomimists, robed in pink  
—Not to have had to stop for gas and heard  
the sad, two-noted wooden tune  
of disparate wooden clogs  
a grease-stained filling station floor.  
(In another country the clogs would all be tested.  
Each pair there would have identical pitch.)  
—A pity not to have heard  
the other, less primitive music of the fat brown bird  
who sings above the broken gasoline pump  
in a bamboo church of Jesuit baroque:  
three towers, five silver crosses.  
—Yes, a pity not to have pondered,  
blurr'dly and inconclusively  
and, careful and finicky,  
the whittled fantasies of wooden cages.  
—Never to have studied history in  
the weak calligraphy of songbirds' cages  
—to have had to hear so much like politicians' speeches:  
two hours of unrelenting oratory  
and then a sudden golden silence  
in which the traveller takes a notebook, writes:

Is it lack of imagination that makes us come  
to imagined places, not just stay at home?  
Or could Pascal have been not entirely right  
about just sitting quietly in one's room?

the choice is never wide and never free  
And here, or there . . . No. Should we have stayed at home,  
wherever that may be?"