

## THINKING OF WORK

A brief storm  
blew the earth clean.

There was much  
to do: sun to put up,  
clouds to put out,  
blue to install,  
limbs to remove,  
grass to implant.

(The grass failed.  
We ordered new grass.)

A limb cracked in half  
in the short storm,  
short with its feeling.

We saw its innards,  
all the hollow places.

Something flew out of  
the window and then  
the window flew out of the window.

## CITY OF THE ONE-SIDED SUN

We had considered what  
was said and how long  
it had never been heard.  
Now, when we're beyond  
credulity, can we insist  
on knowing what is true.  
Would that I were believed,  
shadowed by others to see  
which beliefs were mine.

The walk of a stranger,  
movements of the earth  
are no longer believable.  
It's the act that matters:  
less the hydrant, red solid,  
quiet with water, more  
the belief in believing,  
the faith we have even  
in reason, a partial tree.

## TOWNS WE SAW

We drove through Cairo  
on our way to Broken Bow,  
stopping for gas in Anselmo,  
or no, was it Thedford?  
Seneca reminded us of Rome—  
we turned at Hyannis  
for the lake down to Ogallala,  
and ate in Bridgeport.  
Gering was closed. But  
Scottsbluff was wide open.  
Did they misspell “Minatare?”  
After Alliance into  
Chadron for a night,  
we passed Crawford  
toward shiny Hot Springs.  
Custer seemed faster  
than Rapid City even.  
Wasta and a town  
called Wall cost us.  
Scenic, a ghost town  
we sped through to Interior.  
Staying at Cedar Pass,  
we aimed for Wounded Knee  
with Vetal on our minds.  
Mission led us into  
Valentine where we slept.  
Crookston we crossed,  
exploring Wood Lake  
and less so Ainsworth.  
O’Neill we barely saw,

but didn't we see Venus?  
Creighton and its  
neighbors Bazile Mills  
and Plainview were  
clear to us. Pierce  
was quick, and Nor-  
folk, too. Not much  
to eat in Columbus.  
David City was tiny  
(Bee, 2 miles). We loved  
Seward on our way  
to Lincoln, and later,  
your Milwaukee.

## INTERIOR, SD

She grasps the  
ways we're falling  
through each other  
into the ocean  
where it's said  
the sea creatures  
are waiting. Let's  
put this another  
way: here's someone  
who's bound to  
smile and we're  
not convinced that  
we're not going  
to see each  
other again. Let's  
state it com-  
plexly: she stared  
into the monitor.  
She smiled. And  
then sweetly she  
did not smile.

## MOSCOW

We saw the legs  
of a coyote run  
past into the grass  
during our eve-  
ning drive through  
rolling mounds  
resembling kneel-  
ing bison. Such  
gorgeous hills  
make one wish  
to see the dark  
slopes where  
famous bodies  
may be buried,  
folded into their  
interior where  
the dirt meets  
the soil and re-  
minds one of  
the way water  
travels under-  
ground or how  
temperature some  
feet below the  
surface is the  
same everywhere  
one goes. This  
land has a pur-  
chase on me. If  
there could be

a monument to  
the journey we  
took, it would  
have to be grand  
and quiet and  
shabby and wear-  
ing thin of its paint  
with another monument  
showing through.

## FLORIDA, MISSOURI

This is the breezy firsthand  
account of my life. If you don't  
want to listen, I don't care.

But is a secret still a secret  
if no one's around not to hear it?  
I see a mistake on your face.

In the olden days, news fit  
only on the size of a particular  
broadsheet. Now an article

could go on and on online.  
There's really no dimension  
to what we should know.

I don't like music coming from  
the same box I'm typing into—  
my radio's on in the other room.

I'm always hoping there's not  
a bulletin about a disaster.  
Then I have to stop writing.