No one seems to be home, 
and the note on the door 
says “Gone,” yet what are words 
these days but things 
just slung around? Still, 
we’ve traveled such a distance. 
If they’re gone, it would be 
almost unbearable, 
not because we love them— 
in fact they’re hard to love— 
but because, you know, 
we’re the kind of people 
who think a step forward 
is a step well taken. 
Life’s too short, we always say, 
and don’t put off until tomorrow 
what you can do today. 
We pass these things on—clues 
for living well and long. 
We suspect they’re here, hiding 
as they often have behind “Gone” 
and “Beware,” and other signs 
that we know are really saying, 
“Find us, please.” They’re always 
sort of lost. And this house 
of theirs, this house is weird, 
as if it was built with floorboards 
that wouldn’t tongue, wouldn’t groove. 
Something about it feels forced. 
On their walls is some framed mish 
and mash, which they call art. 
The door’s unlocked. 
They don’t appear to be here— 
closets emptied, refrigerator unplugged, 
and a note on the kitchen table, addressed 
to us, which they cannot possibly mean.