

Dawn

The first boat
out in the water bobs along in the breaking up
of the surface
and holds the course loosely, battered by waves
but still seems to have as its end a movement
toward sunrise:
orange-yellow, flat, plate-like recurrence of light
on the water
encrusted with mist. The sky has not even
started to yellow
or blue, but retains its dull grayish wall-like
plaster of fog
the light cuts through, so seeming to come from nowhere
if not sudden. These boaters have brought with them
the expectation and the non-expectation, the gear
and knowledge that somewhere beneath this, something or
nothing
and even non-directing is an aspect of life
as singing is a reversal for fish, as lovely as drowning,
but one never thinks of that —
The father is talking to his boys
with a fog of cigarette smoke as haze-bound as the sun.
His gear is as netted and intricate as the mess
he must work through every morning, and so brings survival
into this instant of not really looking forward,
for the boat moves by happenstance, water buffets it
into a continuous resetting of non-direction
which relies upon the sameness and the generosity of the sea.
What after all are destinations for the entangling
schools of fish or wheeling, eyeing gulls
except the next moment of eating
in the mediocre waters?