

LIKE A GAS FLAME GOING OUT
WITH THE SOUND OF TRYING FOR LIFE

He says:

You know that copper kettle —
before you boil water in it, remember
it needs retinning. There's nothing
wrong with being unsteady —
the bottom didn't matter then,
it was that fine ring, flaring
that fit over a hole
in the wood stove.

She says:

All the time we were talking
his hands were moving,
brushing away imaginary flies,
pushing the sleeves down over
those blue-gray arms.
Then he'd roll them up again.

He says:

I have this dream
that I'm part of a machine
making some chemical.
Feedstocks come in, a pipe
out of my mouth. One night
there is this dry feeling
that wakes me up,
my mouth is filling up
with a powder.
that wasn't in the plan, but it's a factory
and I guess things go wrong
once in a while.

She says:

I asked him if he wanted more oxygen,
but he said, less,
too much oxygen is not good for you,
remember the Mercury astronauts.
I told him I'd bring the children
next time.

He says:

I remember

the view of Toledo
from across the Tagus. And this madonna
holding twins in her arms.

She says:
At the end he just kept talking
about this woman
leading him, holding him
the way a man does,
dancing the tango.