

Jeff Hardin

As the Day Before So the Day After

Sometimes simply one song lasts all day,
not one note decaying, just pure purpose and presence.
And then, of course, there was yesterday, its now empty rooms.

Life's done with so many of us, gone on to visit others.
We sense how small our bodies really are.
No longer do we pitch ourselves from couch to floor.

As kids we knew our climbing took us never far enough.
A part of us kept going and can't be summoned back.
How often, without knowing, were we
another's still-life?

For some the future departs even before it gets here
—as though a page were missing, a key image or word,
and a life were meant to study what it moves along without.

In the old days a field nearby was world enough for me.
An old man sneezing sent the chickens toward the barn.
Life was a leaning-down fencepost, two or three nails too deep to
get hold of.