

Pottage

for Willi Paynter, 3 weeks

It's real. You can warm your hands on it.
Smell it, it's good: a dish of plums
or the sea in its roof-tiles sparkling
or swan in a cold mirror full embraced,
or you,
round-eyed, and staring at a world
not yet deciphered,
new—

your hands like the leaves of a violet—

In the monkey house the lemurs stared
(I could not entertain them long).
Poor heroes, tiny in their myths—
like the oriole
who wakes me before dawn to say
"It's me, me, mine!"

The "other" world
bobs like a sea beast under waves;
it may be there.
It's this world, warm,
delectable,
this one
I want.

At your mother's face
you lick your lips.

M. Travis Lane