

S.P. ZITNER

## Congreve

Weary of Q and A:

“Why can’t we recall the plot  
of *The Way of the World*,  
yet staged, the play is lucid?  
You may re-phrase the question.  
Do you know the date?”

In town for my doctoral orals,  
and sleepless with such conundrums,  
I put on robe and slippers  
and, not to wake my host and hostess,  
friends of friends, I tiptoed  
down their faux-Tudor stairway  
in search of coffee. Six a.m.  
was blinding in the kitchen,  
my hostess already up.  
Neither *The New York Times* she held,  
nor the tabletop of rippled glass  
concealed her nakedness.  
“Coffee?” she asked; a goddess  
does not speak in subtexts.  
I nodded. She rose and turned.  
The epiphany had begun:  
arms brighter than her ring,  
breasts and belly to the taste of Solomon,  
rosy, hale and supple.

After a proper breakfast  
I left for my adventure  
armoured in the certainty  
that those one can formulate,  
let alone answer well,  
are rarely the important questions.