TIME’S CANDLE

This candle measures time
by the flare, each moment, of a vanished
moth. Destruction replenishes
itself perfectly: burns wings,
ever wick. Just as the dray-horse
clatters through spider-webs
—at the open gates of the brewery—
woven, with unstoppable energy,
from snapped threads of the morning.
On the news: missiles were fired
at a just re-built new settlement.

MAKING PLANS

The potter shapes a bowl, thinking of fruit.
But it’s used to hold water, then matches.
A lover signs his letter in the tenderest
of loops. She can’t read his name,
and so marries another. He sighs, and mends
fish-nets instead. The chess-player
moves a pawn to checkmate his future:
my kingdom for a horse, my horse for a lover,
my lover for even a crust of bread.
The dice roll, though their eyes are blind
cataracts of ivory. Only “Mrs. Osiris—
Fortune-Teller,” otherwise my wife,
knows what will come. In lovemaking,
the walls fall away for her, and she sees
right down the street. Unashamed,
she makes love, as we all must,
out of time, in the public gaze
of distant past and far future.
Later, over a cup of tea, she will share
only one certainty: “We’ll do that again.”