

First

I am not sure what to dream.
 In the snow spit dark I travel
 from sick house
 to sick house to answer
 coughs, tremors, slurs and
 seizures
 no doctor has found the reasons for.

Second

I am not sure what dreams take.
 Measure the fennel, measure
 the last fresh basil or
 a small tin of Hunan sauce
 they send you with your soup.
 My most recent dreams

are flies that jerk toward a moon
 in an early heat, then freeze
 in a returning April snow; a battle,
 a push of ills through these
 androgyne nights and what my fluttering eyes
 can't do is talk
 or sing

automatically, a clear pen
 of the soul, or remember what one remembers
 in whole numbers, chronologies, the geometry
 of spikes that push up, split
 the fecal dirt
 into a catharsis of
 bloom.

Again:

what can I dream? My birds
cower, they can not swim. Their wild flights
from the last open water
leave them nothing
to speed my sleep away from. Everyone awake
is on their own way
to their own way
of dying.

Third.

I sit in the living room
before this relative who can barely walk.
I say
no one
is prepared
for what
at last must come.

There is no dream for that.

Bob Vance