

GEORGE MOORE  
**A FIELD IN PORTUGAL**

“In 1940 Lisbon, happiness was staged so that God could believe it still existed.”

—Antoine de Saint-Exupéry

A field this forgotten runs wild  
at the edges of the garden

the innkeeper tends with some care  
as the rusted railroad tracks

descend the hill and disappear  
near the fallen dolmen.

Now concentrate on table stone  
upended by Victorian tourists

who hunt their genome  
in the bog of a Medieval ancestry.

How tilted just so the memory  
inconspicuous and incomplete

fuses with field and Portugal  
for those few who escaped

the Nazis. If not the time they had  
in the fifth millennium BCE

for ceremony and slate and silence  
here still are the surroundings of

survival. A distinguishing trait  
among the human species—

Neanderthal to Denisovan—  
was the ability to slip through

life without much trace.  
Turn again to the dolmen

a toppled fact or faith  
in something wild beyond the grave

in repetition and release  
as the garden blooms and the innkeeper

keeps digging at one stubborn stone  
that will replace him in the end.