

## Home Life

Billy Collins

I was sitting still in an armchair  
with nothing on my mind but birdsong  
and the look of a bookcase  
yet I felt a distinct sensation of travel.

Several countries seemed to slip by  
as if I were on a train at night  
heading across a wide plain  
into the mountains, darkened windows and all.

And I remained there for only an hour—  
the moody hour before dinner—  
but it felt like several months,  
one of them featuring a national holiday.

Finally, the winter sun sank  
behind the silhouetted landscape,  
leaving me alone in the dark where  
the sound of breathing seemed to be coming,

not from the dog on the rug,  
but from a lost tribesman tending his cook fire,  
a thread of blue smoke rising  
from a forest that reeked of infinity.