

Why We Aren't Together Anymore William Doreski

Remember when you applied
for that nursing job in Halifax?
They handed you a thirty page
application, and stuck me
with two hundred pages to fill out
to determine if I qualified
for Canadian citizenship
or belonged in the old stone prison
near the mouth of the famous harbor.
Afraid to even print my name,
I ducked outside where smokers
clustered in soggy little cliques.
The chat of seagulls alerted me
to the long arc of air time
to Iceland, while nearby
a graveyard ripe with remains
of Titanic victims simmered
in degraded autumn sunlight.
They offered you the job
but warned that I'd be imprisoned
for failing to complete the form.
No problem: they'd provide you
with a fresh new spouse endowed
with a hefty government grant.
You accepted the offer and rushed
to entrap me with the news.
So I caught the bus to Boston,
my tombstone of a suitcase
banging against my knees.
As the bus hissed and grumbled
through the low-slung suburbs
I gradually shed myself
and everything you'd made of me,
and faced the long night of travel
with my senses reignited
by the kind of absence I love.

William Doreski has published three critical studies and several collections of poetry. His work has appeared in many journals. He has taught writing and literature at Emerson, Goddard, Boston University, and Keene State College. His new poetry collection is *A Black River, A Dark Fall*.