As if it didn’t matter which way was home

It was the long boat that arrives before living begins that survives the flood.

(Not the boat that comes after living, that moves into the rolling fog

and the dear ones, the ones being waved to, have already lost their faces, the boat that absolves the burdens of all that caring.) This is the boat

that loves the waters of earth and the earth of earth, loves the gravel sound of beaching under its hull happy to tip to its side

astride the forest, to let its kept animals back onto the earth content to be taken apart plank by plank, to be burned in a family hearth

or if pieces drift away they drift to drifting across the blue seas, or the green, drift to other uses or to none, or if it was not a boat, it will be a train; it will be a kind of transport only approximated here, it is the coming before before the going beyond.

(Recalling Stanley Kunitz’s Long Boat)