

TREMORS

He was alone in the house
when the first shock came
and would have passed it off
as just a truck rumbling by.
But the house recognized it
with a quick new creak,
the glasses in the sink sang
as if someone were testing
leaded crystal.

The next time it came stronger.
the house spoke to both of them
with all its joints. He swore
he saw the window undulate.
They argued if they should stay
in the house or run out.
Some of the glasses broke, and
in the closet the toy animals
tumbled from a basket. But
the house had no cracks.

She said: It was actually good
to have the house shake. You see,
we think we build them square
and strong, of seasoned lumber,
a tested plan. But they might be
card houses for all we know,
an unfired pot, a wine glass
on too tall a stem. A quiver,
the least strain, and they give.
Especially a home. So solid
looking, you don't think it
breathes. Ours stood the test.

He said: I wonder when the next
quake will come.