

New in Town

NANCY WHITE

Yes, he still drops by, still for no reason. Even
today when rain bathes the house and
the path sheds its glove of dust.

He's going on again, *The hydrogen*
molecule clings to oxygen:
but we have learned

the two will never really touch. It wasn't me,
but his story got around, how he fled
when his father's voice

beat him like a stick, when the words
scoured him down, till his skin
soured, till his hair

and mouth and eyes flamed. Arriving, he told us
My father's dead, later I have no father,
then I am the son of God.

We are a garden, he says, We will grow again.
My holy father promises. Go ahead
And laugh but with my own eyes

I see the lily lean to him, the cranesbill sweetening
as he sits on the back steps drinking
a glass of water from my house.