

# The New Criterion

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## The owner of the house

by Louis Simpson

The movers came, and took  
her bed, table, everything,  
until the house was empty.

She was walking on a  
at night, in a dark dress,  
and so she was hit.

A driver who had seen it  
said that he thought someone  
threw a doll up in the air.

I found some smaller things  
that had been overlooked.  
A fish made of wood.

A bell, perhaps for calling  
a cat. Every night  
one comes around and mourns.

A hidden drawer with thread  
and needle, thimble, things  
as hidden as a heart.

She let the house run down,  
the garden be overgrown,  
lost in her arcane studies.

They had to do with the eye  
of a fish that she had found  
somewhere in Mexico.

A neighbor disconnected  
the refrigerator, but did not  
think to empty it. Fishes stink.

I open the door of a cabinet,  
and forget to close it again  
*whack!* The side of my head.

Just to remind you,  
she whispers, it's my house.  
The carpenters are hard at work

I need more space. She stands  
watching a while, and leaves.  
She'll have the run of it still.

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**Louis Simpson** is working on a new book of poems. He lives in Stony Brook, New York.

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