

-Vincent-

When my boots are alone
in the corner

I try not to think
of Van Gogh's ear.

Of how strange it would be
if I died,
and my boots stayed
cockeyed
at the same ready angle,
as jaunty as at the moment
I step away

until this house falls down.

Heels still touching.

Edges rubbed a little bare,
where I try to wiggle them off
without bending over.

Years from now,
tungsten crampons I install
in the fall, will still be shining
under the soles, slightly arched,
ready for ice that always comes.

Boots can wait forever.

They end each day that way
after the chores, in a room so quiet
you can hear a speck
of drying mud flake,
and fall to the mat.

That's how I know:
it wasn't crazy voices
that tore him from his roots,

it was the presence of his absence
still standing in his boots.