

Sleights of the Tongue

I am disintegrating--
wrote habitat "discussion"
today instead of "destruction,"
was hoping to convince
the parents of my students
how valuable it is for us to view
a free-ranging troop
of nonhuman primates
before it is too late, that is,
thinking of how the typist
had me promoting nature
"conversation" of late
where I had most assuredly
meant to nurture that
magnificent and mighty debate
between who we were
and who we say we are.

What conservations are being lost
in the dystolic paraphrases
that rhythm across the crucial gaps
where the metaphors jump?
Maybe they climb, crawl, stumble, and fly,
or beg, borrow, and brachiate
before they crumble on legs of punful sorrow.

Sometime ego a famous poet
read my youthful sonnet
about a dying town
which began "between two rivers
Cairo sleeps and drowns,"
and pointed out back then
before he had a laureate become
that I had dysspelled "speaches"
and perhaps meant "reaches."
But perhaps my brain was just timed
to come apart before my hands
and my profound verse
was simply the unfaithful rime
of maladroït paraphasia.

