



PROJECT MUSE®

American Husband

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Published by The Ohio State University Press

Wayson, Kary.

American Husband.

Columbus: The Ohio State University Press, 2009.

Project MUSE., <https://muse.jhu.edu/>.



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THE WRONG PLACE FOR A LONG TIME

When I ask if she wants to start running at the farthest fir tree,
she guesses, hedges her bets, she asks *what?*
and means yes.

Another number adds one to itself
and we call it an accumulation of tenderness:
She will need me and I will need her to need me and not
the other way around,
resembling nothing much more than love, even now.
Nothing much that I can tell.
Not an alcoholic and not

not an alcoholic, we spend every Sunday discussing what
each of us meant by what we said to the other, forever
getting ready to be able to begin to say
what neither of us will let
just yet. Not a lot unlike building a bridge in a cartoon:
nailing the one plank, then stepping out
to nail the next, dividing the *good bye* from the *by*
god, the big *if* from the bullheaded *but*, always leaving
and always about to leave: *lervous*,
by which I mean *a little nervous* and she will understand.