A voice behind me speaks: *Don’t move.*
*Stay there,* says the voice again,
and I turn to see a stranger settling
on a bench in front of the pictures. Open face.
Shopping bags from Marshall Fields.
*It’s the color,* she says. *Don’t move.*
I’m wearing a shirt saturated with blue,
like the blue in the haystacks. What is this
instant intimacy with strangers?
Her eyes catch blue.

Geometry of haystacks on the wall,
old mutual friends. Blur of snow effect.
Monet left not a trace of the easel he dragged
across stubble fields of brown and blue.
Compositions shift. Autumn evening strikes
a tinge of red in the straw. Physics of light.
*Fugitive effects.* Is that what he wrote,
what he knew, and why I come?

She’s a designer of kitchens, it turns out,
and likes looking at things done over and over—
pieces fitted together, newly arranged.
Grammar of umber, vowel of cerulean blue.
We are catching up on what is going on
in the world, relieved to be here.

I consider the houses among the trees.
Rooftops, I’d never noticed, just discernible
in strokes of coppery blue. So tiny. Just suggestions.
And the woman who saw me
as part of the landscape—
when I turn around again, she’s gone.