

JUDITH LEVISON

CROSS ABOVE THE STOVE

Pray as if you mean it.
Then before we marry I will
Hang the cross above the kitchen stove,
Open the book to parables as if freshly read.

I do not know how to live any other way.
The other ways have vanquished sun and moon,
Stars fall off the cardboard black.

At midnight, I remember my life as a long series
Of cryptic notes I could not understand.
Still it is good to murmur them, prove
My faith is obedient and not just an ornament
Collecting grease through enraptured years—
Testing my cooking of visions and stars
The cross wiped down each spring, as its features
Softens and disappear.