

BILL COYLE

Perspectives

i.

Hardy, in his great poem “Hap,” maintains
he would be comforted to find his pains

were not in fact what they in fact appear to be —
expected outcomes of “Crass Casualty” —

but the fulfillment of some higher will
intent on doing Thomas Hardy ill.

ii.

Aeneas, faced with overwhelming odds,
saw in a vision how the very gods

whom he had served now helped his foes destroy
the walls and towers and palaces of Troy.

There is in Vergil, though, no evidence
this vision comforted the Trojan prince.

Leave Taking

i.m. Sten Söderström

The dead, we say, are the departed. They
pass on, they pass away, they leave behind
family, friends, the whole of humankind —
they have gone on before. Or so we say.

But could it be the opposite is true?
Now, as I stand here in the graveled drive
at moonrise, unaccountably alive,
I have the sense that it is we, not you,

who are departing, spun at breakneck speed
through space and time, while you stay where you are —
intimate of dark matter and bright star —
and watch the brilliant, faithless world recede.