"Morning Picture"

Adreinne Rich

They have carried the mahogany chair and the cane rocker
Out under the lilac bush.
And my father and mother darkly sit there. in black clothes.
Our clapboard house stands fast on its hill.
My doll lies in her wicker pram
Gazing at western Massachusetts.
This was our world.
I could remake each shaft of grass
Feeling its rasp on my fingers.
Draw out the map of every lilac leaf
Or the net of veins on my father's
Grief-tranced hand.
Out of my head. half-bursting.
Still filling, the dream condenses— Shadows. crystals, ceilings.
meadows. globes of dew.
Under the dull green of the lilacs, out in the light
Carving each spoke of the pram. the turned porch-pillars,
Under high early-summer clouds,
I am Effie. visible and invisible,
Remembering and remembered.
They will move from the house.
Give the toys and pets away.
Mute and rigid with loss my mother
Will ride the train to Baptist Corner.
The silk-spool will run bare.
I tell you, the thread that bound us lies
   Faint as a web in the dew.
   Should I make you. world. again.
Could I give back the leaf its skeleton, the air
   Its early-summer cloud, the house
   Its noonday presence. shadowless.
And leave this out? I am Effie. you were my dream