

### **After Making Love We Hear Footsteps**

For I can snore like a bullhorn  
Or play loud music  
or sit up talking with any reasonably sober Irishman  
and Fergus will only sink deeper  
into his dreamless sleep, which goes by all in one  
flash,  
but let there be that heavy breathing  
or a stifled come-cry anywhere in the house  
and he will wrench himself awake  
and make for it on the run – as now, we lie together,  
after making love, quiet, touching along the length of  
our bodies,  
familiar touch of the long-married,  
and he appears—in his baseball pajamas, it happens,  
the neck opening so small he has to screw them on,  
which one day may make him wonder  
about the mental capacity of baseball players—  
and flops down between us and hugs us and snuggles  
himself to sleep,  
his face gleaming with satisfaction at being this very  
child.

In the half darkness we look at each other  
and smile  
and touch arms across his little, startlingly muscled  
body—  
this one whom habit of memory propels to the ground  
of his making,  
sleeper only the mortal sounds can sing awake,  
this blessing loves gives again into our arms.

Galway Kinnell, *Mortal Acts, Mortal Words*  
(Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 1980), 5.