

Ghazal

MICHAEL COLLIER

When I was young I couldn't wait to leave home
and then I went away to make the world my home.

In England a poet's wife suggested a word for what I felt,
"heimweh." German for homesickness even when you're home.

The agoraphobe and claustrophobe respectively
cannot bear to leave or stay inside their home.

Our day-old son wrapped in a blanket in your arms
and I'm in the car waiting to take both of you home.

Mortgage means "dead pledge." To buy a house
you need one. A house can be mistaken for a home.

It won't be hard to name the poet who wrote a sonnet sequence
about his mother and father. He called it "The Broken Home."

A shovel, rake, and pickax hang inside my neighbor's garage.
Like a god he has ordered the chaos of his home.

Never let me forget: colliers mine coal. Michael's an angel.
In heaven as on earth the coal of grief warms the soul's home.

"Ghazal" from *The Ledge: Poems by Michael Collier*, copyright © 2000. Reprinted by permission of Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company. All rights reserved.