

DEBORAH ALLBRITAIN

Sad Fish

For once life may be on your side, the objects
in the house beginning to breathe, the heart, a slice

of rosemary toast, content to sit in the doorway,
dip into the long smell of evening coffee, distant

traffic heading north, and you have nothing
to think about except what to cook for your dinner,

when to set the clocks back before bed.
In the life you thought
you wanted, some *us*

has vaulted off the balcony, no longer the
loggerhead snoring beside you.

And you enter this sentence knowing you can't go
back to those days of petty grievances, sad fish,

happy badger, slouched at each end of the sofa,
the marriage of hunched failure, which when said aloud,

failure, sounds French, a beautiful word for something
so lousy, falling on the stone floor,
its life spent in the dark.