

# Craven

To Joe

Mostly gone, *trenchant*, *lambent*,  
so many more,  
calved from the melting glacier of my memory,  
they've floated quietly away  
and now lie deeply below the  
horizon of my recallability.

*Numinous*, once so numerous,  
sits unused in some dusty darkness.

And *slough*, is it like dew or duff,  
or something else?

If invited to breakfast with  
the president, do I have *panache* or *cachet*?

Is it of *elan* or *éclat* I am bereft,

and when I sell the house

better to get an *appraisal* or an *aprisal*?

Egregious, I know, to confuse *riven*

with *shriven* but will I be forgiven

if I don't remember whether

I'm an *aesthete* or an *ascetic*?

Such words, to be perfectly honest never near,  
are now rocketing off on twice daily trips  
to the Kuiper Belt of my mental solar system,  
orbits more and more elliptical,  
farther and farther away from  
the gravitational center of my left hemisphere,  
not likely to return anytime soon  
from their distant dysphasic apogee.

The rusty tumblers of my mind  
now no longer fall like before  
and my morning's productive plans  
by early afternoon lie rumpled  
and forgotten in a cobwebby corner  
of some abandoned hippocampal pantry,  
where a faded yellow apron with red piping,  
and drooping rickrack, hangs sadly  
from a hook I must have put there years ago.