Outside the Institution
Also by Lars Amund Våge

Poetry
Det andre rommet
Utanfor institusjonen

Fiction
Øvelse kald vinter
Fager kveldssol smiler
Kyr
Dra meg opp!
Baronen
Begynnelsen
Guten med den mjukke magen
Oklahoma
Rubato
Den framande byen. Ein roman om Wilhelm Reich
Guten og den vesle mannen
Kunsten å gå
Tangentane

Translations
Lorine Niedecker: Nord sentralt
Joy Harjo: Å koma tilbake frå fienden
Tennessee Williams: Katt på heitt blekktak
Bob Arnold: Sanndrøymd
**Contents**

From *The Other Room*

Behind the word there is a shadow 11  
Look, you who come walking 12  
You who live and can love 13  
Behind loss there is another loss 14  
You do not need to build 15  
Behind the trees 16  
My mother cried 18  
A woman was near me 19  
A woman left me 20  
The other room 22  
The hayloft 26  
The sheep farmer 28  
I remember 48  
I came down from the mountains 49

From *Outside the Institution*

The old poet 53  
My father has gone 55  
Father asks 57  
Ivory 58  
Night 59  
Tourist 60  
A dog with three eyes 61  
Photos from the war 62  
Upbringing 63  
Homecoming 67  
Finery 68  
A turn for the worse 69  
Words 71
The ordinary 72
The car ride 74
Invisible 89
I return to the landscape 91
Loss 92
Question 93
To the institution 94
Parting 96
On the way to the car 97
The conference room 98
The blind spot 99
Movements 100
Lunch 101
Outside the Institution
from *The Other Room*
Behind the word there is shadow
Behind the shadow a farm with house and trees
Behind the trees a bright, green field
thought cannot reach
Look, you who come walking
You who are alive, you
who have strayed
all the way out here
See the houses, the painting
so many layers
You who come so near
See old boards, the borders of houses
and rotten handles
on something that once had
a name. Something mineral
An opening
A door that swings
on the outskirts of the heart
**You who live and can love**

You who live and can love
long, untamed and forget
who you are
See the meat hanging
on the wall, drier than twigs

Look further, behind the house
in a room out there
in the open, it collapsed
when you put your foot down

Behind your eyes
Behind a distance
dear one
Far away over there
Make a leap
Behind water, reeds
behind the rooms in the hay
women rest
Sleep has chased them
to Andromeda
Behind loss there is another loss
but less distinct
Under the farmyard is an other farmyard
not yet excavated
No one knows
where the old house stood
No one hears the dogs
bite off slivers of bone
with their canines
You shall find
invisible post holes
under the grass
You do not need to build
anything for me
I built these rooms myself
from nails and snow
I would rather you shut out the day
Took rooms away
BEHIND THE TREES

Behind the trees, shadows
waver slowly
from sun and time
Behind the fence that has fallen down
lush ferns, sweet peas
Behind branches, what was
covered
needles, leaves
and further down to a dark room
of air
Behind the wind, hills, the horizon
hollows left by humans
near crags, cliffs
There was I
Behind the curtain that fell
so unexpectedly
The applause had silenced
The wind stilled
I was on the endless
back stage, painted black
so the walls did not show
Distances did not exist anymore
I was there
not in thought
nor body
but with the sense of smell, oblivion
skin
Detected
the burnt stench of
searchlights
The lamp filaments went cold
I walked along the wall
groping my way
reading structures
synthetic fibre, plaster
and old wood
Suddenly I was inside the wall
I did not cough from the mineral wool
or dust
Nothing itched
or pinched me
I swam as in a fluid
I kicked my feet slowly
swallowing and swallowing
something soft
**My mother cried**

My mother cried
in the distance between me and another woman
My mother cried in the empty space
not to be understood, not to be reached
My mother cried hot
and dry
My mother cried, I thought, I believed, because
a woman was with me
who could not see
me

O, mother in mist, mother in oatmeal
mornings long ago
You placed everything away
in mountainsides

Mother in twigs, in tassels
Mother in the sweepings from the winter
fire wood on a floor. You
knew less than dust and trash
thrown around by children
but you cried

You drew black tree tops against the sky
with the India ink pens
I got for Christmas
once
You said the light blue
was not for me
A woman was near me
lived with me
walked with me
very near my arm
without stumbling

I left her
She left me
(often)
Still she accompanied me
loyal, beautiful, dumb
with patience

She said nothing, came to me
stayed with me
leant against me, through
the days, years
like a whale calf
almost like mother

Like mother, mother
she said without laughing
I did not understand
I was young
And laughed back at her

Her children were in me
before they were in her
A woman left me

A woman left me
every day
She walked faster than me
She was fitter. She was more silent
She did not spend too much time
on questions

When I was by the garage, and the mailbox
where the dead bird lay
she was already in the house

She used whatever she found
to keep quiet
even doors, messages of wood
that opened one last time
for her hands

She sprang up the stairs inside
she climbed the spine
lit by electric suns
She threw off her shawls and tentacles
to one who might come by
some other time

She escaped to the roof
tottering along the ridge
Her steps on the tiles died
out
Boughs and cones from the farmyard tree
rushed from the eaves
And it was night
And it was morning
the next day
When I bent down
to light the stove
I heard
her breathing through the chimney