

Pedalling Out

The man has greased his chain.
He has new ball bearings
and a titanium frame.

His wife sits sullen, sunken
into her frame, her skin tucked
in tight, as if it's ready
for a good night's sleep.

He takes his marathon ticket
in and out of its envelope.
He is changing his mind.
Everywhere in his wife's family
is sickness - her mother's tumour
her own anorexia.

His wife's throat is a dead-duct.
Her shoulder blades bar him like handles
and her ribs needle him at night.

But he will go. His bones need distance.
He has an entire war to pedal out,
has been collecting miles like stamps
for forty years.

He folds his bike like a body
into the trunk. The front wheel sits
beside him in the passenger seat,
newly treaded and thinly spoked.

His bib's on.
He's off.

Lori Weber