

Insurance

Michael Theune

He keeps arguments for the existence of God
nailed next to the mirror in his bathroom
and reads them every morning while he shaves,
Anselm, Descartes, Aquinas. He parts his hair
and puts on the suit his wife had given him
back when everything waited for him, when
the world was small enough to clench in his fist
or stash in a cigar box.

Leaving his house, he checks all the doors, making
sure they're locked, and counts the twenty-three
steps he takes toward his car. With one hand
he fumbles for his keys; with the other
he grips the policies he will sell today to
old people, young couples, or anyone else
with something to fear and something to lose.

He has Pascal's Wager taped to his rear-view mirror,
an argument that says it's better to believe
than not to
and the way to believe is to live as though you had faith,
not in your brakes or your dog or your storm windows,
but faith in something bigger and harder to see.

Forcing his eyes closed, he throws his car into reverse,
trying to recall just where he started from
and how he'll get back.