

## 4 Poems by David Kowalczyk

### Life Before Latte

It's  
time  
I

got  
down  
to  
work.

Maybe.

### Like Portentous Shadows

Of a stern and ancient November  
afternoon, life retreats from us  
slowly yet incessantly.

As it inches away, how precious  
become the bus driver's warm  
welcoming nod, the sincere smile  
of a bank teller asking:  
"How have you been?"

How magnified by a thousand  
become these small gestures  
of kindness, recognized now  
for what they have always been:  
priceless, irreplaceable treasures.

### Listening to My Parents Talk in Polish

In elementary school,  
I would often imagine  
translations of the conversations  
my parents would hold in Polish,  
a tongue they shared with each other,  
yet refused to teach their children.

This is what I would  
hear them say:

"Learn to be  
a stranger in  
your own home."

"What would I give  
to become invisible  
each morning."

"Our natural state  
is to be lost."

### Life Is A Funny Old Dog

After prayers for white French tulips  
at my doorstep arrives  
a bouquet of wilted dandelions.