Another Thing Prompt

Perhaps “thing” will be in the title of today’s poem. Go anywhere following the thing.

To Look at Any Thing

To look at any thing,
If you would know that thing,
You must look at it long:
To look at this green and say,
"I have seen spring in these
Woods," will not do - you must
Be the thing you see:
You must be the dark snakes of
Stems and ferny plumes of leaves,
You must enter in
To the small silences between
The leaves,
You must take your time
And touch the very peace
They issue from.

John Moffitt
in *Teaching With Fire*, edited by
S.M. Intrator and M. Scribner

“Thing Language”

This ocean, humiliating in its disguises
Tougher than anything.
No one listens to poetry. The ocean
Does not mean to be listened to. A drop
Or crash of water. It means
Nothing.
It
Is bread and butter
Pepper and salt. The death
That young men hope for. Aimlessly
It pounds the shore. White and aimless signals. No
One listens to poetry.

Jack Spicer
Where’s that thing?

Where’s that thing?
you ask me
looking in the cabinet above the stove.
The new one or old one, I reply,
fairly sure you know what I mean.
Old one.
Under the sink.
It’s not there.
Just look.
I’m looking.
Look under that stuff.
It’s not here.
The other stuff.
Nope.
Wait. You mean the green one?
No. Blue. I think it’s blue.
Oh. That’s in the drawer.
I checked the drawer.
Did you check behind the plastic thing?
We’re talking about the same thing, right, the one with the
weird top?
Of course.
Wait. Here it is.

John Kenney
from Love Poems (for People with Children)

Get Close

So close you see something you thought you knew
as if for the first time, then closer, beyond seeing—
lost, mystified.

Like the time I photographed
the grey shadow on the side of a tree, magnifying
until I realized it was not a shadow but growing moss.

Until I realized the white dots were not dots
but tiny flowers blooming in the moss
until I was so close I disappeared.
In the whole universe there was nothing
and no one but the tree and me,
and we were only one thing.

Susan Zimmerman
anthologized in The Path to Kindness
edited by James Crews

Things Shouldn’t Be So Hard

A life should leave
deep tracks:
ruts where she
went out and back
to get the mail
or move the hose
around the yard;
where she used to
stand before the sink,
a worn-out place;
beneath her hand
the china knobs
rubbed down to
white pastilles;
the switch she
used to feel for
in the dark
almost erased.
Her things should
keep her marks.
The passage
of a life should show;
it should abrade.
And when life stops,
a certain space—
however small—
should be left scarred
by the grand and
damaging parade.
Things shouldn’t
be so hard.

Kay Ryan
from The Niagra River.