

EVE STAFFORD

Leaving him

Today
you left him
took the boy
packed the car
hired a trailer
got your father
lifting and lugging
the heavy washing
machine and microwave
the desk and shelves
beds and boxes
and your cat
moved in on dad
and his cat.

Tomorrow
you re-route
the morning
drop the boy
re-direct mail
notify bank
disown debt
adjust mortgage
you change courses
swap childcare
credit account
replace locks
cut keys.

Next day
you stay neutral
hose the misfiring
child down
next thing
dissolve horizon
review moves
shunt viewpoints
revamp lists
sangfroid
you burn effects
store others
retard mood
reflex outlook
ready for shutdown.

Once
before pensions
I walked out
just the babe
pram and safety-
pinned pillowslip
of nappies

no father
no furniture
no mortgage
no money
no cat
no keys
(no shelter)

just feet
uneven bitumen
wheels rattling
nowhere to go.

Simpler then.