

CONSOLATIONS AFTER AN AFFAIR

My plants are whispering to one another:
they are planning a little party
later on in the week about watering time.
I have quilts on beds and walls
that think it is still the 19th century.
They know nothing of automobiles and jet planes.
For them a wheat field in January
is their mother and enough.
I've discovered that I don't need
a retirement plan, a plan to succeed.
A snow leopard sleeps beside me
like a slow, warm breeze.
And I can hear the inner birds singing
alone in this house I love.

"Cozy" is not an adjective often associated with poetry, but this poem feels that way. And of course, there's the usual joy of not knowing (What kind of affair? How did a snow leopard get into the house?) that's woven into so many of Tate's poems. I have a distinct memory of mulling over this poem while cleaning offices in Fargo, North Dakota--take that for what you will.

- Nate Logan