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Dr. Vishwanath Bite

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Brick Wall

Steve De France

My brother sits in a tract home in
Lomita, California . . . Stares
out a back door toward a
brick wall. The same wall
he has stared
at for thirty years.

Soon his wife asks what he wants
for dinner. Later that evening,
he takes out some well-worn
maps of the American west.
Studies them.
Draws lines in red. Erases old ones.
Figures out mileage. Plans on saving
money. They need to take a trip. In a
while, his wife asks him to change the
television channel. And as he
clicks the remote, his eyes film over.
He doesn't live there anymore.

And me, I need to write something.
But I haven't the heart for it.
Instead,
I must cut old umbilical cords.
Cut all tedious ties that hold me
twisting in boredom.

I need the courage
to slip their
closing noose.
Simply cock my head,
turn my wing,
& glide into the
long
cool shadows of the afternoon.