

BEING IN THIS WORLD MAKES ME FEEL LIKE A TIME TRAVELER

by Kaveh Akbar

visiting a past self. Being anywhere makes me thirsty.
When I wake, I ask God to slide into my head quickly before I do.
As a boy, I spit a peach pit onto my father's prayer rug and immediately

it turned into a locust. Its charge: devour the vast fields of my ignorance.
The prophet Muhammad described a full stomach as containing
one-third food, one-third liquid, and one-third air.

For years, I kept a two-fists-long beard and opened my mouth only to push air out.
One day I stopped in a lobby for cocktails and hors d'oeuvres
and ever since, the life of this world has seemed still. Every night,

the moon unpeels itself without affectation. It's exhausting, remaining
humble amidst the vicissitudes of fortune. It's difficult
to be anything at all with the whole world right here for the having.