

## Butter Side Down

In this house  
as you walk on the floor  
it crunches  
and I'm not talking  
crisp clean deep-pile  
carpet I'm talking  
cornflakes

In this house  
when you open a door  
it sticks  
think I'm talking  
not-quite-dry satinwood  
supergloss? no  
I'm talking  
chewing gum

In this house  
kitchen smells bring you  
running  
no I'm not talking  
freshly-baked bread rolls or spice cake  
I'm talking  
burnt toast

In this house tripping  
from room to room means  
what it says yes I am talking  
taking a toss over  
cardboard packaging  
abandoned shoes  
old apple cores  
dead batteries  
empty crisp packets  
fish-and-chip wrappings  
yogurt cartons  
yes I'm talking  
garbage household  
waste

Couldn't you cry? but  
in this house  
when you lay down your head  
on the table  
and weep well  
watch out  
because we are not talking  
polished surfaces

laundered place mats  
we're talking  
jam  
in your hair

*Joy Howard*