At night, a uniformed shadow still tries
to cross the bedroom wall. But it obscures
nothing, not even the spider’s web
she forgot at the top left corner.
In the morning, rain from a cloudless sky.
The beggar at the door erases himself completely
as she gives him bread. He leaves no
tracks in the mud. As she breast-feeds
her son, there’s no screen between
warm gums on chilled nipples,
and dusty wedding photos on the shelf;
no ditch between more rain
and wolfing down a half-loaf
of ready-sliced bread, each day of it
identical and growing stale. Night.
Night falls yet again. She lights
a candle and stares at it endlessly, as mesmerized
as a moth. But the cold in her full nipples
isn’t warmed away. Instead, it’s lit up.
TELLING THE TIME BY SALVADOR DALÍ’S MELTING WATCH

A fish is drawn up
from the depths in a water-spout:
like a naked woman with blonde
hair and shining eyes
—or a very luminous watch.

Between this second and the next,
the pre-historic fly
continues to buzz and die
in its ever-falling tear of amber.

The spider shrivels to a dot
in the dusty bath. The walls
of Carthage burn in Augustine’s
inflammable heart—and fall.
History’s taps won’t turn.

Yesterday limps across fields
like a hungry fox. It can’t,
not quite, catch the broken
-down garbage-truck.

For new lovers, the bed’s
headboard takes flight,
knocking unashamedly
on dividing walls and thoughts.
They unfold tousled wings.

Next door, a clock
listens voyeuristically. It forgets
to tick. The future just isn’t
what it used to be.
ROWAN TREE

At noon, our rowan tree
is a red waterfall of berries.
Another battle upstream?

At dusk, boughs of lipsticked
girls, bunched mouths
eager to be admired, even kissed.

Our rowan, that sprang from seed
in droppings that plashed, unplanned
but urgently, from a gull chasing

scraps in a garbage truck.
For life’s cycles to continue,
whether in battles or love—

gulls must chase trucks.