

LOUISA HOWEROW

## **A FLOCK OF TERNS AT DUSK**

You follow their mute flight  
over the bay, their strong, even  
wing beats stroking the grey sky.

Sometimes all you can do is lie down  
on the shore and see yourself  
flying with them, this graceful progeny

of winged dinosaurs. Sometimes  
all you want is to forget that everyone  
you love is dying, bit by bit, and

only a fine mesh holds everyone in.  
The flock spreads out, overlaps,  
drops, and lifts. A tern breaks loose

and you feel the breath pulled from your lungs.