

LISE GASTON

DRUMBEG I

Dusk, the ocean signals
depths, logs jostle dark
its surface. Some finned thing.

Three shaggy dogs
in decreasing size
growl at me in passing,

nightmare familiars
my colonial dreamcatcher doesn't keep
out. Clear crag of Tacoma lit

in the distance. Birds cluster
like brown lace at the surf,
mallards and drakes evenly

matched. Geese bellow
wings over water, skimming
their fallen selves. Looped cartoon

bark of seals couples the slim waves'
suck and shuck over rocks, tunnelling
train-like sound. The unknown fin.

Sun unseen all day, now setting.
Turning, this
shadow of me stays.

LET

“Despair is a form of certainty . . . a confident memory of the future . . .”

—Rebecca Solnit, *Men Explain Things to Me* (2014)

Despair of bright green winding, studded with pigweed.

Is this motorcycle fueling of prairie sky dangerous enough for you?

A containment. A regulation. Another law with its dog collars, chains, its red rubber gimp suit, pleasuring us.

Form slips into buildings, unawares.

Of politics and certitude, there are no limits. In dinner conversation, in bright green garden parties of broken glass.

Certainty of death in saucer eyes of frozen rock fish in Chinatown.

Uncertainty: four severed scaly paws clawed on ice. Birds, not-quail, caged in back.

Let dominoes fall / clack the counter / count / bills / changing cracked hands.

Experience super / natural / government / mandated / pleasure in picturesque ribboning through clear-cut—

Be uncertain, maybe. Those paws.

Larger themes unspool through capillaries, inflame (just) under my skin. Foreshadowing blooms, like it knows how.

Than turtles, bigger. Logs, wetter. Heron spearing wind.

Knowledge didn't remove us from phenomena. They are wrong who say it, tonguing the world-ending syllables, the black molar caverns, stroking their separation like a pelt.