

AIMEE PENNA

WORKDAY AUBADE

Drive-of-(no real)-shame this morning
through the lightening mist of Valley Forge,

where ghosts of soldiers huddle together
in their replica cabins, frost-bitten feet

hanging over the edges of too-short bunks.
One spirit shivers at the end of an overnight post,

crouched behind a cannon he aims at joggers
and an army of deer. Your cat slept curled

at my feet all night long, until you reached
over me and turned off the Reveille alarm clock.

In the sky, a smudge of moon remains, like a stain
on sheets the day can't yet bring itself to wash.

AFTER HEARING SEAMUS HEANEY ON THE SELF AS NOUN

made into verb by poetry, I follow the walkway—
the Boston snow falling outside the glass
like a reverse snow globe—to find
the noun of you tucked into the hotel bed.

And I join you in that “verb, pure verb,”*
unsure of anything but present tense—
the physical incontrovertibility of your collarbone
your chest, your soft places, your breath in my ear ...

I hold onto your shoulders, your hips,
content to let kisses blanket over any questions
of future or syntax or exactly whose hands
may be holding onto us in this gentle shaking of now.

*From Seamus Heaney’s “Oysters”