

MIKE MADILL

BLIND TO ALL SWAY

*no measure of content could make me love life as fiercely
as learning to live with loss. — from Michael Crummey's
"Water Birds: A Letter," *Salvage* (2002).*

Perched on the verge
of a sump-hole brimming,
its only outlet stopped up
too deep to see
where the blockage lies.

I can't clear a path
if I don't know where to look,
my plumber's snake a crippled cobra—
blind to all sway, deaf to any charm.
My faith needs a measurable depth,
a gypsy promise or golden calf.

When I feed a new line
out the basement window, I'm left
with a void damp and drained,
the old me siphoned away
the day you turned to the light
far beyond hospital fluorescents.

Where the hell have you gone?
Even if revealed, I'd still be
second-guessing all the twists,
mistrusting mine-fields
of aquifer and crevasse.