

Anaerobic

Humans can outrun every land animal
over long distances, but learn this:
those who have nothing to love
steal from nature.

All of us are both thief and contraband,
this flesh awaiting return to its source,

the landscape we cannot escape from.
We have enough organs to know
our evolution from silt. Now

the pond that trembles
in the stomach breeds creatures
that need no lungs.

The desert and deep ocean
are just as hospitable for this thing
with limbs,

except for the cells inside. Hide.

Kintsugi

In my family's display case, shards of shattered vases pieced back together by gold lacquer. The first one was smashed on a tantrum-filled Monday morning by the boy with sharp words, too sharp for his age, a sword he had swallowed now exposed.

Twelve months later, the first smog-free night in a decade. He celebrated with the flower vases and threw them up to the stars in the hopes of bringing one home. Speckled sky was soon drained of its lights, turning into a pitch black that, like all colors, must be shared, and therefore shared with the pots. They came down charred.

I wonder if the boy knew that the pots were made of clay, and that a kiln will burst when a fire inside of it is too hot to be a fire. I wonder if he knew that gravity would enhance the flame and soon the flames would be flames unto themselves. I wonder if he knew he caused the rain. And it rained pottery for days.

Lake-Effect Snow

We found flakes on fire hydrants
that will never save a life.

Sunday, talk of cigarettes
to heat our systems.

The lake no longer frozen mid-wave,
we dipped the dust of our fathers

past our ankles, below sight.
We jumped in like driftwood,

hoped to deposit ourselves on
a different bank. Morning:

this city still too cold for whispering
away into vapor. Even the homes burn

only freeze frame by freeze
frame. So we warm our lungs

with the endings of fire, remember
our fathers not as their bodies,

but as songs scattered from town to town.
They are loved by the schoolchildren

making snowmen
out of ash.