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Two Poems by Lisa Furmanski



Deluge

Glaciers calve, a pummeling of blue by blue. Severed melts, swollen sea. The tiniest lives choke on salt, stall in warmth. There will be no ark for plankton, no raft to ride out the ending and wait for doves. There will be no wings inside the storm, only debris of hubris — tractors, tin roofs, tennis shoes, enough to whack anyone still standing.

I build a ship with what I know, words and tablespoons and begonias. Vessel summoned, I embark with fistfuls — Red

Deluge

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Sahel, quartz-flecked clay, fine white sand — the very grounds I walked on. My fingers sigh as I sail away. This writing leaks and my bucket for bailing already brims. Needles of rain, soaked socks, why plunge into a storm face-first? An ark rescues a certain clarity, a purpose — belief.

What becomes of the skeptic, the isolated? My son living at ease with cats and dogs? Or those who live low — never a choice — they sputter on shore, throats filling like jars? All those rivals waving at the rail — saved. So much judgment in a flood. Whose fury whips the clouds? Who cranks the drilling rigs to spit and spit? Who names hurricanes after themselves?



Apologia

Oh, I ate a bee! This meadow blows through with invaders —
loosestrife, goldenrod — while wind thins without riders.

These days, no mouth without harm — my speech is overly
warm and melts prehistory — lost glaciers shining my tongue.

I kneel, splitting a worm where I split the soil — snapping
hearts which launch tall, shivering bodies — I never taste them,

worms or soil or hearts. Red faces and yellow throats throttled
with bracken a wren could stand on — a wind undoes the plots.

I tune to the wren and hear a thousand miles in a syllable —
her news is omen, plastic bags along the dried ribbon of a river.

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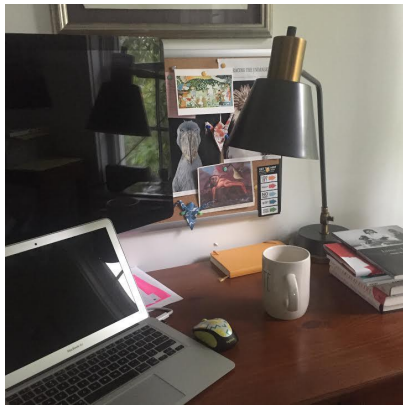
I tune the finch wobbling in a birch after the open sea — snared
circles of heat and wire. I could have set habitats, not sight-lines,

and fallowed for song. My body is resting, I have nothing more
than phrases — a mouth can be small, my mind too late. A bee

tastes of dust, paper, air. I am sorry to have been standing here.

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Lisa Furmanski lives and works in New Hampshire. Her poetry has appeared in *Poetry*, *Antioch Review*, *Gettysburg Review*, *Prairie Schooner*, *Tupelo Review*, and elsewhere.

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