HERE

Here are the ways of seeing a crow:
shadows of the deep lake
past the thermocline,
or the quiet tones
of bird gossip,
the bright, quick talk
of bright, glittering things.

The stars the projector scatters
light upon your face,
make your eyes glow.
You cross your arms,
bite your lips,
and I feel like a child again,
teeth losing their stability.

The crow doesn’t know
how to shiver
through the trapped heat in its feathers,
it knows how to speak, but not to cry.

I am enchanted with hated things,
birds that have sung and screeched,
dogs whose jaws don’t lock,
quiet things that slither.
You are washed in moonlight,
and the birds chatter of turkey eggs
between the pine needles.
New England

Ask me where I’m going to keep
my bones.

Your eyes are of the northeast,
the old growth,
the open spaces that scream of history.
The ice sparks black there,
the heart of it throwing light
in shattered fragments.

The earth there has known winter.
The frost has traced
the brick buildings in crystal spirals,
a pattern traced through generations.
The ice bites, fragile,
throws dust at the moon,
the ice mimics the stars.

The northeastern air hangs in your lungs,
a ghost of cityscapes and mountains.
As you breathe it pops
and shimmers and shudders.

Lead me home.
My bones will one day tear
that earth open,
they will set in the frost heaves.
Here is the seacoast:
wet suited scallopers,
two tank dives in January,
the swell of wind
as snow blankets sand,
blankets granite,
blankets snow.

The water both wants you,
and wants nothing.
Blizzards aren’t rough things –
they come in a quiet rage.

The granite fields,
the shivering volcanic rocks,
are not your friend.
The old quarries are collapsing
in on themselves,
your bones are intrusive,
the water scum loves you
for what you leave behind.

The granite does not love you,
but in deep winter,
it will kiss blood into your skin,
force your heart to beat.

The sun bursts paint
the snow caps
the reflection of photons –
here are the UV rays
we could never picture.
Crickets chirp the pattern
of a 4:45 afternoon.

The lost lives of the seacoast
do not pretend to want conversation,
to care about how your teeth grind
or the lake, that is at once
new, and already ancient.
Your eyes are the color of granite
mountaintops, your voice
the wind columns.
Your hands want the power
of blueberry bushes.

The Atlantic doesn’t
make you shiver anymore.
The water soaks
to your calcium bones,
the snow splinters
into your too hard skin.
Portsmouth, After Labor Day

The sound of rain
makes your ears go numb.
Outside, the ocean wind is
whale calls, the air
green and granite.

Good morning,
the storm-sea light spells across
your fingertips,
fllicking photons into
your eyes.

The bedsheets are damp,
humidity swelling under
thunderclaps.
Through the open window,
rain sings one step
away from sleet.

The ocean rocks are bone,
shivering with salt and
calcium. Your head buzzes,
full of static,
and barnacles.
HERE

Here is what love has left you:
a warm summer lake in the fall,
the sunlight through the leaves,
mosquitoes that love the stagnance,
the sigh of grass,
snakes sleeping in the sun,
the color of your breath when you breathe out fall,
the hush that comes only mid 2am blizzard
when everything glows.
Exoskeleton
for Martin Brewer

These wasps keep coming in
my brain to die.
I can’t stop them,
the windows are sealed,
edges laced with
plaster and caulk.

They keep finding their ways
in. There are holes,
everywhere, and they
take the time to find them.

I don’t know how
to process grief.
In my mouth I have hornets,
through my teeth they have
barbed stingers.

Some days they leave
my chest buzzing,
dusty with plaster. But around these days,
you are an infection
deep in my throat.
HERE

I am not interested in your names, or how you align yourself in the world. Talk to me, let your speech fall on my skin, pattern it in sunlight. Snap my atoms apart.

I am taking the volcanic rock that echoes across my forests, the rocks the sea kisses. I am taking the snow, the ice that snaps trees, the oysters in the river, the washed away bridges. These are mine.

Give me the pit bulls, the black death harbingers, things that poison in self defense. I will hold them, I will welcome them.