

The wind works its way through the day
lifts the loose leaves from the lawn
and blows them through the curtains, banging
the velvet sash against the window frame,
pressing into the house as if it were a field,
free on all sides. Soft sounds flow with it, into
my ears, the mind, but only for a moment.
An empty drawer left pulled out jostles
and startles the mice under the stove
who scamper off, followed by squeaks
of songbirds gathered on the back porch.
The floor plan, constructed for obstruction
reverberates inside the walls. This is the end
where the wind changes texture, seeking again
the void of a meadow, the empty yellow centers
of small white daffodils, then back over the hills,
flapping the fur of the farm animals who stand
at intervals, perforating the horizon, along with
the fences and trees. But all else is otherwise
relatively unoccupied. Nothing closeted nor
committed, only a sky cropped by the end of
peripheral vision, left to do its thing —
cut out, unsettle, ground, carry on! Now
it blows back out over the early blooming bulbs,
making chaos of last winter's leaves
across the asphalt outside the Walmart.
Because this is March, a feeling
of wanting to be free
from harsh familiar weather, though
it continues amok, candid, frank, forceful,
without navigational hazard, passing over our
old weathered fingers, wrinkled from so many
past winds, rocking the chairs on all the porches
with its invisible hand, forcing points
beyond the headlands, producing sympathies
by passing through an organ pipe or knocking a
bow into metal strings pulled tight over
hollow wood, or creating knowledge
that renders the interior of a heart available.
The turning of the earth

is never decreed. It unfolds like a map
though they say it's not the territory. Nonetheless,
the hedges take shape according to the path
the wind takes, like all the other life
standing in fixed positions, cutting or breaking the
flow of space, not as much as death does, not unlike
these cut branches of quince
awaiting bloom in the kitchen
scented with sleep from an overwhelm of flowering
or a faint dizzying I remember
before the tallest cliff in California
or the vain striving that haunts the Whitehall
hunting grounds, kicking up the scent of game
from a book I read so many times it lives on in
my nose, or how an elder sitting in the heat
with her fan, leading from the action of a hand,
discloses to herself a false breeze, as she says,
"Oh yes, that was the day we dealt the cards
outside on the folding table, last spring, after hours
of grilling meat, and you took a photo with that
old fashioned camera, the one where we could see
right into the aperture, and we drank so much we
became *completely unclenched*."

All vacations begin with a wish
but eventually we return, like the daffodils, or the
bus, to our strange city of habit, to our houses and
apartments encased in windows, to a job, to news
of the latest scandal, confidences made public, to
raw dealings and occasional opportunities, from one
topological space to another, to live our life of
daily living, hopeful but unsettled with memories
of having loved too much, was it too much, and of
the etched florets on the wine glasses at the rental
cottage, where the rocks form a door to the sea.