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Marblehead Minuet

1.

On this northern beach,
everything clear and visible against a gray green
 sea,
barefoot children scamper along the pebbled
 taupe.
Falls are cushioned, movement unrestricted.

2.

A teenager lifts his pant legs,
wades back and forth in the frigid water,
stares out at the ocean.

A few couples, in sweaters and jackets,
huddle on benches or stroll.

3.

The swings hang on their iron scaffold.
I swallowed the wind when I used to swing.
A pump of legs brought more and more height
 until
I reached the ends of the arc.
At that moment, I dared myself to jump.
To land unscathed, on my feet meant bravery,
 success.

I wedge myself into the plastic loop
that pinches my thighs.
The chain straps are cold metal.
I lean, lift my feet from the earth
on this crisp spring day, hope
my body remembers.

Of Rooms and Wings

It is frigid outdoors
I want to let in chickadees and jays,
fill rooms with wings,
let them relax rumpled feathers into sleekness.

Despite ice and darkness,
they arc, dive in blurs of color,
celebrate their bounty of thistle and seed
with flight not prayer.

In early morning birds fall
one right after another
transformed by winter nights into missiles
that burn with the frenzy
to preserve and renew.

Does a bird ever question
its incessant struggle for warmth and food,
pause on a branch,
wonder what that world is behind the glass
where yellow light pools