

## Overture

By cock and bull, tooth and oxidized nail  
you will whistle like Harpo Marx  
while I write *La Symphonie de C'est Fini*.  
The notes ricochet off the crags of your heart  
as magnetic North guides tall ships to breach the waves,  
before the topple of sails, being swallowed by endless sea.  
A certain lifeline for one, it was tidily hidden  
in your back pocket when we were dry-docked.  
I thrash and recall old dreams of porpoises,  
know why I learnt to swim at four in the cold of Blackstone Lake,  
one finger touching bottom before racing towards light.

You pointed it out with a laugh, liking the linguistics,  
how “lover” without the “L” becomes “over”  
until it rose like an overture, a watery muffle of music  
to break hardened earth, as if for gentle burial.  
I replied with “Over/kill.”

Overtures are the sly, impish passes you made  
when your kitchen-handy wife reached low for the meat platter,  
put x-ray vision on old Harris lines in her bones hidden by a long skirt  
your sour/sweet mouth twitching over a Gilbey's gin bottle  
in a live commercial your friends watched without buying  
Me, having the coin to try the package and susceptible  
to the subliminal encased in extraterrestrial signs,  
a figurine in a snow globe floating unanchored in a styrofoam sea.

By the buffet table you motioned to me like Marcel Marceau  
with your palms miming the movement up a staircase  
to show me your love in a familiar but locked place  
and I glimpsed funhouse distortions in the vanity mirror  
before you came down to whistle like Harpo.

Through cracks there plays a scrimmage between ritual,  
the scissoring open of shrink-wrapped goods from Ikea and  
being stuck like a bad investor in a bear market,  
until the slight push of one domino against another, as it will at 29 files,  
gains enough momentum to make the Empire State Building fall.

This is physics. It is all seasons. It is the invitation of spring  
flourishing with dewy buds, showcasing into summery green,  
eviscerating the leaves by autumn with the last blazing colour.  
When winter comes, by the barren of its snowy landscape there is no shock,  
the symphony of our own construct now lapping us to sleep.