

The Sextant

by Philip F. Clark

The shape of what we sought
took a strange turn: It was this,
the soft giving in, not the
metal and cut of it, not the wet brine
or the slow and long grasp I had
planned for. It was silence we came to,
watching our bodies become the years
away; the skin and marble-hard sea
of premonition.

Those arm-on-the-back farewells
set now like clocks inside us, as naked
and close I was hope, and
you were what I can only call
consolation, as day after day you
remained a grief in my throat.

Sated with waiting we drifted here, itinerant;
not lost but unable to land. And then we did.
We prayed for a bit. Not often.

Touch became the sea of us,
and boated in bed I held you and waited,
for the end of something still ahead.

