

Beachcomber's dirge

by Walter Bjorkman

along a shingled beach, clash of gulls
wend upwards, disappearing into grey
night's high tide recedes, a naturalist gathers whelks
studied in palm, ignoring clatter
--an echo

what makes blue periwinkles smile?
is it that they cluster together?

she asked forty years before
museums and metronomes filled spaces until
one last shell is tossed back to the brine

