

Lyme Tick

MITCH LESCARBEAU

Through the porch screen of the makeshift sickroom
the patient boats in the cove
on their moorings, the summer armada
cumulus, afternoon seabreeze:
it's a splendid day on Narragansett Bay, but I know only
a scummy film of nausea for all being. Fever 104:
the wood grain pattern on a door frame is turning into a wolf.
Conversation somewhere—
chatter of ancestors? Neighbors? Radio?—
all arbitrary as dice rolled in a cup and tossed
onto green velvet.
Nothing is holding together.
The world is like clear cellophane the moment
before combustion.
The spirochetes in my blood are like a billion
yellow eggs squeezed from a million termite queens.
Outside the tilting window
a mockingbird in a honeysuckle
is bubbling out pentameters.
Above the cove, a seagull
is hawking and chuckling
in the voice of my dead mother.