

## *Lost at Sea*

MITCH LESCARBEAU

The mass for the missing is over:  
it's too cold, the wind off the Atlantic  
wheedling everybody back toward their cars.

The bundled cluster of friends lingering:  
we're still staring and  
hunched over the three empty boxes.

Now the Point Judith Lighthouse turns wheat,  
then flame, as the sun lifts out of the plum-colored sea.

Someone is tossing an evergreen wreath over the wall:  
a ring for the irretrievable.  
The waves and current slap it back into the breakwater.

The last of us hang back, then break for home,  
the promise of a hut mug of cognac and cocoa  
steaming up the kitchen windowpane: life. Sun.

Three women stay, faces open to the stinging wind  
and their mouths making tight circles of grief.

They could be carolers singing of joy to the world,  
such a foreign language to those drifting fishermen  
is the sorrow of the living.