

Asilidae:

robber fly perched on a plank by the barn,

fat thorax gray-furred and plushed,  
Spy vs. Spy sun-glinting eyes.

All afternoon it's shot past  
and landed, crossed my mind.

Wings folded neat  
as a pocket knife's blades,  
a quivering pulse,

dark buzz as it rises and falls

clutches its immobilized  
amber-eyed prey,

carries it back to the sun-hot plank.

Robber fly snatches  
prey from the air,

time by the fetlock,  
a bee, a small moth,  
soft green worm  
on a silken thread.

## Hemisphere Projections

A cut and folded dunce-cap cone, forehead  
at the equator, a great distortion  
at the polar tip.

On the endpapers of the lap-sized, maroon-covered atlas from childhood,  
the mapmaker's dilemma: "the round Earth on flat paper,"  
how to create "the most useful Earth portrait  
for a given purpose."

They might "peel the globe into flower-like petals,"  
or an orange squashed flat on a table,  
continents divided by tears. Pith and rind contours.

I put myself here, at the table  
and window overlooking asters, walnut tree,  
guardrail and road disappearing over the hill.

Green walnut husks drop onto the pavement.  
Walnut fruit cupped in two hands, a handful of  
bright citrus smell, inside: convolutions of kernel, the core.

A Mina Loy lampshade map: you are the bulb,  
the bulb's view projected through layers of paper  
and East is West, West becomes East.

On the table, fruit fly caught in a glass vinegar bottle,  
ridged dome overhead distorting, from inside:  
backwards words, numbers,  
a rabbit and garland label.

Bubbles rise to the surface, settle at the foamy equator.  
The mother slowly sifting to the bottom,  
sludgy, yeasty, essence of apples and fall.

Silver hat of the lid holds in the air,  
shifting pressure systems  
that can roar around the latitudes  
stirring the trades, stilling the doldrums.

It's hard to put one's finger  
on arrows showing prevailing winds  
and see it in the walnut tree: tossing limbs  
tend East or West in any moment. Waving world outside  
where print ends and the outer world begins.

[rock poem]

Gray mound above the brown, matted leaves; its surface shows scratched striations, perhaps from the past's frozen, mile-deep washing machine glacier toss. The size of a small torso: a thief could steal this rock (to do what with it, anyway, throw it in the river?), leave me bereft. But now it's here among oaks and maples, heat and cold. All-weather rock.

I study it. In woolens and layers, perched on a smaller rock. Gray rock splotched with lichens. On one slope, an angled scratch 5" long cuts to a lower slope; a piece broke off once (or this rock split from another). The surface is gray dissolving into gray, ocean and fog.

The lichen splotches are sage green with unbroken dark outlines, like kohl, a beagle's lined eyes; or gray with jagged edges; or completely round and black. A vision of islands, coastlines and sea. Some lichens' dark edges are wider, appearing steep-sloped, providing relief.

Today, weather in the 30s, when I put my hand on it: a neutral temperature.

Radiolaria, hello, hello

Coast of a river mouth fresh and salty,

an estuary: hybrid zone  
of shushing waves and ducks' webs.

My friend hovered there for days.

Nursery of spawn and spat,

harbor of refuge,

haven for plankton, eel grass, grass

of the moon snail,

barnacles' larval swirl,

Radiolaria, hello, hello.

Bleached things: white clam shells, bones,

sanderlings' scalloped feathers.

The day would start early,  
coffee in a pot in the pantry.

Wind on the dunes blows the stiff grass,

mooring sticks, like wands, jerk and shake  
above their anchors,

sandy smudge on the horizon, gray chop,  
elegy a white rag  
tossed off the spume of waves.

Before I realized it, looking for the sandy point,  
I walked up on a flock:

black bills, black eyes, black heads upending  
in the shallows, weeds draped from bills;  
breasts nudge and nudge the waves,  
bellows of the chest,

one utters a low reedy sigh

