

## The Way I've Been Seeing Things Lately

A flock of blackbirds dispersed across a dead skyline.  
Slashed by highway street lights, like mini party poppers,  
shrapnel across the horizon. That's the way  
I've been seeing things lately.

It snowed twice in Georgia this year—  
Red clay smothered  
by pillowed whiteness.  
My father, standing in the driveway, unblinking  
says this is nothing compared to the coldness in Canada.  
My lolling, clumsy tongue didn't ask him  
how he would know.  
The stillness of halfborn icicles, water clinging.  
Water suspended is the kind of silence  
only a Georgian could care to write about.

I am no stranger to water retention. How water moves  
and doesn't move  
in body and soil. My father's bloated ankles  
are poor flood controls. To make water run, I drag  
my finger through soil and create blood. The kidney  
rejects water, and this world is killing my father. To learn  
the body impels death is to accept I have never  
been able to let go of  
it.

Dose is the poison and every tree is excess carbon.  
That's the way I've been seeing things lately.

I want to believe I am a carbon copy  
of my parents that will walk this earth  
when they are long gone and not a foreigner  
who can't speak my mother tongue.  
Mother  
tongue, there is no homeland for us  
when layers of concrete have severed  
the loam of Earth from the pads of our feet.  
To dance on concrete is

a looming future,  
and we have yet to learn the steps.