

Skin and Bones

Deployment Day 150

Halfway through October and I have lost
hope of autumn, everything still the green
green green it was when you left.

I wonder if this will be another year
of wind and banshee flame as I wait
for rain in the endless blue. I want to say
I can bear this, but I wear your absence
in my face, in the way my skin crawls off
in the night when you're asleep in a cold
country, dreaming no doubt of something
warm. Here, our cat stopped eating
six days ago, her haunches peaked
and sharp on my lap, where she circles
herself to sleep. Each time I wonder
if she'll wake. But she is as warm
as this month, and soon she thrums
against my thigh. We are saying a sort
of goodbye each day, when she looks
at me and I am all the heartbreak
a body can hold. We say skin and bones
but nothing of how big the eyes become,
how wonder and starvation are twin.
I try to call you to say this. There is nothing
but the trilling ring that calls out
like a bird that forgot its season.