

To Pops, to forgetfulness:  
*elemussit, nattonamen*  
(he that is going away, to seek for somebody)

If you ever killed someone  
it was by arrowhead.

I know this, standing in the fields  
between houses molting to wind,  
gray paint and black shutters flaking,  
leaving farm houses white as palms.

You can't remember which porch  
you sat on that day to whistle at  
the blonde on her sofa outside,  
feet kicked up with sandals gone,

watching men load up a truck  
with sweaters and china packed  
into orange soda boxes.  
She said, her eyes blue catching fire,

"If you want something,  
you can *use words*" but  
you didn't, which I love.  
Men shuffled between goats and

wheelbarrows, and your father watched  
in a shape that anticipated you—  
The tall curved shoulders, a chin  
that whittled away into white scruff

while, away from the neighbors,  
your sister stood with that nose

sloping down to the slate earth,  
her hair black as curtains, as the womb

that killed your mother—  
She walked so much like the Lenape  
they called her to dance with them,  
to have her face lit by bonfires

racing to the beat of drums,  
to smear earth white and blue  
on her cheeks and forehead.  
The ground here is filled with

their whittled points,  
their errant shots at whitetails,  
buried now so deep in the ground  
and loved by rain and

Pennsylvanian summers that  
the land should sprout arrows, waving  
among Indian corn. Bushels could be gathered,  
soft and green and quivering. And in one shot,

one perfect arc you thought  
you might send slate—deadly, lovely—  
from your thumb into that woman's chest,  
and lodge an arrow where her ribs clasped

like fingers, unmoving—the bones  
joined to protect her thrumming red.