

STACIE CASSARINO

Spell of Motion

I live only here, between your eyes and you.
—Elizabeth Bishop

This is how you inherit
the future.
You stand there looking
for the missing parts
but only see people
practicing gravity.
They make syllables of promise
then rise into air.
They are beautiful and distant
and will stay this way.
Will let you down
but never remember.
Sometimes speech repairs silence
but only in your head.
Only in this carnival wind
can you say things like,
this city is hollow
because you want it to feel that way.
People love vertically.
The rain falls in stages.
Underground, we transport
our bodies between places.
We reconsider the distance
and it is terrible.
On the Discovery channel, a man is saying
our bodies are lightning rods.
Where we touch we leave marks.
There is nothing safe about this.
About felled trees
we drag home

in small numbers
 or the electrical fish we eat from the river.
We manage sensation
 by calling it *involuntary*.
The compass of sound:
 siren, apology, lie.
We say *she broke herself*
 about whoever we know is sad
and may need us. I understand that
 home is a hinge.
We migrate because we have to
 by swinging.
Once my mother said she'd stand
 between me & pain.
She couldn't know the radius
 of here to there
which is the length of time
 outside of time
and the privacy of sky,
 fractioned and forgotten.
Like childhood, like the arc of birds
 in this slow wind.
If I tell you a story, it is the erasure
 of another story.
If you appear
 it is never for long.