

Joelle Biele

RAPTURE

It starts with a low rumbling, white static,
a broken shell to the ear. It starts with water,

tide pulling. It starts with the cold kiss of the sun.
It's hands clapping, birds clamoring,

and laughter coming through the walls.
It starts with snow breathing,

bottles falling, the night hum of a road.
It's a bus shifting gears.

It's the flower inside the tree, the song
inside the wood. It's a mouthpiece buzzing,

the *psh-psh* of a Bach cantata.
It's walking through a pile of leaves.

It starts with wet legs and poppies.
It starts with bitter chicory.

It's diked fields, the suck under your shoe.
It starts with an idling motor. It's horses in fog.

It starts with spilt sugar. It's sizzle and spatter.
It's your voice underwater. It's a bell buoy's sway.

It starts with a sail luffing, whispering
in the wings. It starts with a policeman walking,

a rosy ear, a dog barking, honey and flies.
It starts with a knife sharpening

and plates smashing against the door.
It starts deep in the belly, the back of the throat.

It's a need like salt, crackle and flame.
It starts with sounds you've never made.

It's not your voice in your mouth.
Your words are not your own.

It's the body breaking into islands.
It's the fall through wind lifting white leaves.