DYLAN DEBELIS

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UNTITLED [FOR THOSE WHO DIED TODAY]

Never lose an opportunity of seeing anything
beautiful, for beauty is God’s handwriting
–Ralph Waldo Emerson

When I’m pulled back
through the needle eye,
feet first like air escaping a drowning child, pressed
skin rough oyster shell after years of being broken open on seaside rocks.

When I’m pulled back
through the womb
as the light makes sense of itself
in the dark.

My bearded face intubated, held
by a daughter
whose song follows me out
on the rain, fall weather
with geese gliding south guided gently by a warm breeze.

When I’m pulled back
like a lung finally releasing
its pressure held for decades
in the weight of my head on my neck
on my shoulders and spine on my hips
on my legs on my feet on
hardened mud; eyes
looking out on a lake that stretches too wide to measure
but shines like a forest after first frost.

When I’m pulled back
rigged on a cot
throat open, no longer pulling in dust
or pushing out hymns,
being fed to the belly of the incinerator
where my ashes will mix with the unknown others
and then be taken in a jar to be spread by the wind
somewhere off the coast of Maine.

When I’m pulled back
choiceless, nameless, liberated
from the confines of temperature and turnpikes,
no longer taking note of wavelengths or time.

When I’m pulled back to you
meet me there, as you met me this morning,
in my cough and the children singing near the deli;
meet me there, as you met me this morning,
in your handwriting etched across my perfect unbecoming.