Joshua Jennings Wood is Director of the Creative Writing Conservatory at the Orange County School of the Arts, which serves artistically gifted 7th–12th graders. He has been a finalist for Glimmer Train’s Short Story Award for New Writers, The North American Review’s James Hurst Poetry Prize, and the Pablo Neruda Prize. His writing appears in Volt, DIAGRAM, The Berkeley Poetry Review, SpiralOrb, OccuPoetry, and elsewhere.
OASIS

do not know are ready when
you see what you don’t quite know, like this

This is no ordinary oasis
don’t be fooled. This is the mind’s way of telling

something, something you don’t want to admit to

anyone especially yourself

are more ready than you think. Why else

you watching this? You are also performing, imperfect witness of

a spectator at a mystery show in which you are performing, imperfect witness of

puzzle, skilled participant in action, and

the scene

players assemble, maybe a landscape

seems so obvious now oasis
BETTER LIVING THROUGH CIVILIZATION

“I always had a mania for symmetry.”

Molloy, Samuel Becket

I believed for awhile I invented
misremembered my imagination

things go missing here things get obscured, god
what understatement, what do you do you

try to build an offering some semblance
complete with boundaries routines and

consequences: This is perfect nonsense
areas of the maze get washed

away—all things drift

To entropy

unpiecing to the sea, the idea
though of buried mirrors porous enough

To present

To one