

Lori Lamothe

Reading

at the Peabody-Essex Museum

On the other side of glass
a band plays marching songs
and the leaves
flicker green fire.
The poet tries to ignore what everybody else
isn't—tries to fasten our attention to the words;
drapes cadence
over the chandelier,
the podium, the folding chairs.
But it's spring and the world shines like a new puzzle—
each window pane a promise
that this is the year
we're going to solve everything.

To the Guy Who Posted about Kittens
On His Doorstep

Take care of the kittens jerk ass.

—*Craigslist reader*

You can forget about the girl.
Nobody admits to adding more tape
to a box of cuteness
and expects karma to issue a pardon.

You're on your own now. Better
to make use of your box cutter
and watch them scatter
across Darwin's concrete.

Why not? At first the lightness
of the box will astound you,
and for once the silence won't
remind you you're single.

But it's never that easy, setting
mistakes free. At night, in dreams,
they always find their way back—
tails flickering orange fire,

little eyes aglow, little sandpaper
tongues licking at guilt
like candles that won't blow out
or riddles you can't solve.

The Explorer's Dream

In 1820, Arctic explorer William Scoresby arranged these shapes into a formal classification scheme, which included, in addition to the six-pointed stars, such forms as needle-like hexagonal prismatic columns . . .

--Philip Ball

After so much winter
it was impossible not to think of snow
as a blank page—
the mind numb to everything endless,
the world an unwritten letter,
a silence unbroken.
My wife at home before fires burning,
our sons vanquishing imaginary.
What was there to say?
This eternity a monster without name.

After enough time anybody
can fall into a tunnel of zeros,
slide down absence and emerge in a landscape
where logic blooms upside down.
It wasn't until it happened I understood
there are seas where depths are warmer than surfaces,
that a single sheet of white
can shine fields of infinities.