There’s not much to a campsite,
a companionable ring of rocks,
navigably even ground, firm enough
to stake in a tent, too rocky for bare feet.

On a lucky day the trees around the rim
are company enough. So much bravery
depends on love. The birches are yellowing,
the maple tops turning even faster.

This morning – you’d left early
for work – I saw the sun dazzling through
the mist and lifted the warm cup
to my lips. The day was full
of slowness, hours after breakfast
on foot among ferns, a long time

listening. The yellow leaves dropping
into the dishes. A shuffling

on the forest floor. The broken bars
of the ripples building and re-building.

I rested in a fold-up chair
next to our fold-up shelter.

The dog left his bed to sleep
in the dry leaves. Checkered table cloth.

Red pot holder. Once again, I’m afraid.
I might not know gratitude without you.
Winter Cottage

Descending the dune, sand fine and deep as snow. There is a comfort in being unseen. There is so much sky.

We have this, walking, one foot above, one below, two women weathered in a crinkled love. There’s the luck of aging, a whole seashore empty but for us. There is the plummet, and wings bursting back out.

Last night, I watched your face above the comforter, knitted cap half on, half off, your cheek flushed in firelight, your eyes tender toward the page of a book. There was a time, summer dusk,

when the children screamed, scaring themselves again and again until they were hushed

and the rituals of tooth and towel began. There were the two of us, summer and winter, padding down the paths. In this sweep of sand we sink with each step and our lives, comforting small

cling, bundled in our shells, like beetles to the side of a bowl. What lives beneath the surface

the ocean waves won’t tell. Not much of what the diving birds know crawls out to meet us. Perhaps a nervous shoreline
skitter, seaweed piled with small stones.  
But there, not far into the waves, a nose.  
Closer - whiskers and curious eyes.  

At night the tips of our noses ride  
the pillows. And our eyes, deep under,  
search, search again and follow.
Radiology Calls Back

October - press one to listen –
First Admitting Specialist

patterning in the treetops
afternoon rain, the forest unfazed

each leaf with its knob, its small spot,
the ones still green, even more so

stepping stones shine
in the quickening brook, granite faces

wind in the corner shelter, wind
at our backs, the ridge rimmed with light

a wooly hat, slip on boots, a shelf
in the lean-to, great luck

your hair swept silver, your skin
a shelter whole to enter, fragrant and full

the skitter, the murmur in the brush,
night holds its secrets

late brandy and chocolate by the fire, a plan
for sandaled mornings, the dew rinsing our toes