

Cloistered

It was summer on the north coast,
the wrong coast, they call it in the East.
It was summer. And summer means rain.

Rain dissolved the islands in the Sound,
it buried mountains and turned the ocean gray.
I listened to it rattle at my window.

Funny, how you wake some days
in the middle of the morning, and know
somehow a part of the world has died,

another language lifted from our tongues,
another way of knowing. And you don't know
whether the pulse you feel is yours

or is the fading beat of the world.
An eagle is not a symbol for a thing.
It was early summer or late spring.

I listened to the rain. For all
its tenderness and wealth, the earth
is often a meager gift.

But to know and not to speak
is the greatest grief. Listen.
The world flows away like a wave.