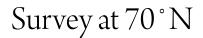
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RACHEL MCCARTHY

Survey at 70°N

We're here to rename the named to pronounce the drowned coves and redraw the coast.

Yet what troubles me most are not the abandoned homes staggering toward the edge

or even the guillemots huddled on their thin ledge but the wind singing to itself;

sounding one low sweeping note as it tunnels clean through snowfall into the wild heart of the Arctic.

I know I'd be lost but it's all I can do not to follow.

*

Late, in your hotel room we take turns nipping at a flask of Absolut and talk of tongues of ice renouncing themselves:

Barents, Novaya Zemlya, Svalbard I don't mention the wind despite the fact you're already drunk

and would be brave enough to kiss me properly, once.

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