

## Sunday

we stayed for the hurricane, our bed  
already halfway to Texas, the roads  
too thick with standstill panic

to drive. we left the cars across town,  
the last good spaces in the college  
garages, the other townies also betting

life continues, bars still take cash. we got  
married at city hall—final errands—while  
outer bands lurched toward the bay.

i packed the windows with what remained:  
bubble wrap, plastic bags, cardboard scraps,  
spit, snot, tape, dread. i called my mother

to cry, to pace myself into composure. i  
said goodbye to the stray cat all the  
neighbors took turns feeding—David Meowie,

one good eye. i cried again in the shower,  
drunk on tallboys and bleach fumes. we  
waited and waited, but the roof stayed put,

the power barely twitched, street signs  
left upright, and the end of the world  
hardly seemed worth much at all.

## Wednesday

we left Florida three days later, our cat  
zipped into her carrier, your job offer  
already in hand, the sky too blister bright

to drive without squinting. we took  
both cars, the good pans, our papers. i left  
my office books, all of academia, betting

life continues, there's a world outside college  
halls and seminar rooms, unread book reviews  
for unread books. we sped out of the bay,

up the Gulf, noses up and around the state's  
armpit, each rest stop a mix of bleach  
and piss and Diet Coke. there was no time

to breathe it all in deeply. before we  
left, our downstairs neighbor let us know  
she took David Meowie in—David was fine,

“one good eye.” i cried again. sometimes  
you pick up what remains, waiting  
and waiting, the storm more threat

than wind, its true power in making  
you forget there is likely something  
after the end of your world.