

This Morning

This morning
the wind was smooth against my cheek.
It danced with the naked aspen,
flirted with a struggling songbird,
but didn't straighten my bird's nest hair.
Its heat pulled my hands, reluctantly, from their cozy pockets,
and with long fingers, unzipped my jacket a quarter of the way.
But its icy shadow of yesterday was just cool enough to awaken my senses
while numbing my sense of time.

Two petite chickadees followed me to the mailbox.
Flopping wildly like tired swimmers struggling to stay afloat,
they fought with the unseasonably warm wind,
rising higher and higher.
And then, out of unison, they threw their wings to their sides,
and rode the wind like skydivers -
 sinking...
 sinking...
until the struggle-stroke began once again.

This morning
water ran across the asphalt.
Crisscrossing.
Racing.
Liquid skiers careening down treacherous slopes.
It collected in murky, slush-filled pools,
overflowing into lakes,
 into seas,
 into oceans.
All contained in two lanes of absentee traffic.
Now,
the oceans are frozen. Solid glaciers,
slick beneath overzealous tires.

The moon skates silently across the thinned, harbour ice.
Calm.
Quiet.
Its round, yellow face, fatter than ever,
sets the ice aglow,
but it doesn't fall through.
It doesn't even crack the surface.
"It's the calm before the storm," they say.

The storm that will trap this brief January spring,
forever, between two solid blocks of winter.