

East Coast Trail, June 2020

The healing smell of good, organic rot:
soft molluscs, crabs unshelled, what clings inside
a dying urchin, kelp all baked and blown in salty wind.
To breathe it in is rebirth, restoration. Reprise the day
a dozen years ago when first I saw what landlocked life
was missing. Rain clings to trees that brush my shoulders,
shins soaked by bushes where their future fruit will hang.
A break in trees reveals a raven's back, hunched and shining.
A drop runs down his beak to quiver at the tip of it:
surface tension over gravity. He's big and out of reach, but still
he caws his brothers to him, takes a perch a little down the shore.
The path I climb was once a waterfall, a tumble over sheared rock,
broken flat. Over the hill, a great white tortoise of an iceberg pokes
his nose into the bay, a lazy morning for him, just a few
raincoated amblers to impress, bright and clumsy. We
pick out our footing carefully, but sweep our cameras
from our pockets with a practiced arc.