

Rachel Jamison Webster

Erosion

Northeastern Ohio, on Lake Erie

We troll by in boats,
learning dissolution,
how slow it goes,
then sudden—

those of us born to know
the houses' bones
graying on the banks, a hollow

doorknob plucked from rocks,
sole token of the rooms
where our parents once
were children.

A clapboard cottage
clutching the cliff for years,
one morning after a storm—is no

flag and soft land
gummed from under
the porch, light spilling up
through what were the floorboards,

like the last laddered breath
of a man before it cracks
and crumples sliding
from its form.



And the far barges go on
 sucking sand and stone
from the lake's dark gut
 that someone has sold
for parking lots.

