

# NORTHERNMOST



Brooklyn Copeland

ungovernable press  
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cover image:  
detail from a photo of an iceberg off the argentinian coast, photographer unknown

NB: The poem “Mariehamn” originally appeared on the poetry blog, O Sweet  
Flowery Roses.

“You can smell the ice before you get to it.”

-Archie Jewell, lookout crew on the *Titanic*

## **Blinka Lilla Stjärna Där**

Gnatclouds swarm  
your face.

This pond grows up to be a melainotype.

Do you own the copyrights?

Scrape their bland little  
corpses from the roof.

Your tonguebuds scrub the lyrical proof:  
exfoliation

is not the divorcing of leaves.  
Is starspray over the archipelago.

Twinkletwinkle insignia night.

## Portrait

Blue that blushes to purple—

purpling bruise, rushing violet.  
Violence to pledged

girlhood, privileged

periwinkle hoodwinked:  
gray that does to cyan.

Elaborate gunmetal ruse.

Warmbody, coolbody,  
heartcolor fullfledged.

Try not to smudge. Blow softly dry.

## Firecrotch

Blueflame, secondmost hot.

That song:

*if you can't be*

*with the one you want,*

*love the one you're with—*

the same is unnaturally blonde,  
talks a bluestreak during

that song:

## Mariehamn

Your ukulele. Just because I could not play.  
By sleight of wave our names are forever

erased from the sand. By sleight of hand  
your card is pulled, melts, seamless,

and our dainty pastel admittance seizes  
the moment of gentle tumult to burrow

maybe beyond the discard pile,  
beyond my boggled-sight?

Beyond my fire-fingered grasp?  
For my love is a painted hermit crab,

yours for a good cry.  
The sea, the sea will provide.

This evening, there will be intrigue  
while our clothes tumble dry low.

## Sisu

On the pallet tallying a math of afters.  
She's frozen, bottle-shaped, a scroll

bobbing on tear-waves,  
a homesick jackrabbit.

What tax betrayed her innermost?

What god-like hemorrhaged footprints  
through her land-escape?

What maid trades maidhood  
through clothing alone? What difference

the language with phrasebooks so endearing?

All told,  
her teeth are strong, and her tongue is sharp,

but she still swallows the vowels.

## Faeroese

dimmur— obscure  
glint— jingle  
vænta— to wait for

Sheepdots—

if the ascending fog keeps ascending.

There is this miracle glimmer,

which, like the sky, thickens to blue,  
and, like the sea, is a handful of clear.

The finecarved cliffs are soft shaven— pet them  
from your seat on the turboprop.

This miracle glimmer is there,

beckons  
where you run your fingers, where your palm  
meets the shallow lungs.

Each hour of the day is pending—

if the stillborn death of new weather,

if its mother, in awe of herself.

## **A Bear Killed Dead**

My bear could surely climb but no longer cared.  
My bear whose eyes scanned the beady horizon.  
My bear who lived in squalor, among competing raptures,  
whose call was shrill and moist as mud.  
My dear whose eyes could surely climb the squalor.  
My dear could live among the competing horizons.  
My dear who called but no longer cared,  
whose rapture was too natural: moist, like mud.  
My heart whose eyes were shrill and scanned.  
My heart could surely climb competing squalors.  
My heart who lived somewhere on the horizon,  
whose rapture beaded his call, moistened by the mud.  
Go back there with me, to that spot, with your X-Acto knife.  
We'll need his fur, his fat, for December.

## Hostel

Frukosten, forty kronor: jaw busting bread,  
cucumber rounds. Butter judiciously spread.  
Sweaty Emmental pared from the top.  
Maxwell granules vigorously swept.  
Mounds of cauldron-brewed porridge  
spruced with wildberry jams.  
Folds of thinly sliced ham,  
wet, yet suitably bland.  
Sixten, in the rafters, shelling pistachios from Iran.

## **Kittilä**

They're mining for gold  
with diamond drills,

through a late winter  
night-looking morning.  
Aurora borealis

means embarrassment

of riches. It's another green,  
not evergreen,  
smeared across their sky.

## Herring Jar

Self by my blue—beside.  
Hand in one smoked  
silver vertebrae comb,

Hand in one sky  
blue as snowself.  
My hand in one lake.

Stretched by one hide.  
Bank of bluesnow  
shoe. Comb for a ride.

## Smell the Ice Melting

I once said, *You can smell the ice*

*before you get to it.*

Greenland, she secretes this

highly personal warning—a door  
on the buoy at the pole. Floating—

no manmade steals unnoticed.

My compass was broken, else possessed by

the northernmost. My nose burned. Aye,  
she learned me melting from burning.

Aye, she learned me how  
I can steer her everdown,

yet never move her  
farther south.