

## Good Morning Heartache

That bastard sun rises again, dissolving  
the only good dream I've had all year.

My waking mind feels for hope, blind  
reach for eyeglasses on the nightstand

or an oxygen regulator fallen  
from my mouth to the ocean floor.

Across town, my friend can't lift her head  
off her pillow, the chemo eating her

platelets and maybe the tumor, while  
in my kitchen, the coffee timer clicks on,

French Roast draining into the carafe.  
On the news, a Somali mother searches

tree bark for emaciated insects: *You see,  
even the bugs are starving.* Dear world,

what good can you offer? The finches'  
red-breasted tune, these strawberries

grown fat around dimpled gold seeds?  
*My son*, she brushes dust from his lips,

*he keeps asking for a donut. Just a nibble  
of a donut. I don't know what to say.*

## Showtime at the Ministry of Lost Causes

On the corner of North Main and Bonanza,  
Sandy busks for change, her rope-yellow hair

gone weeks without water, sun-chapped lips  
mouthing a rusted harmonica. Give her

a cup of coffee, she'll call you *broken*  
*blue wing*. Ask her where she comes from,

she'll sing, her voice a forest full of birds  
you can't name:

*You got field mice in your corn palace,  
ain't nothin' you can do.*

*Field mice in the corn palace,  
ain't nothin' you can do.*

*Melancholy's comin' for you,  
better put down your broom.*

*Y'all die a little every day,  
go 'head now, put down your broom.*

## Colossal Failure of Human Design, We Celebrate the 100th Anniversary of Your Death

What no god could sink  
sunk, and so we trace

our fingers along the filigree  
of your demise, imagine

Wallace Hartley's eight  
musicians dragging notes

out of their instruments,  
like soldiers begging

their dying comrades  
to breathe. *And the band*

*played on*, not because  
of some contract loyalty

or ethic of bravery,  
but because they knew

the only way to enter  
death is as the cello's

body reverberating  
the bow's final stroke.