

and then frays at its edges, grasses bending
and disappears from sight there
and then returns here.

Later, in “From Here, There,” Samuels writes,

That which can be viewed, can be
walked upon so much more now
that this vanishing

is taking place.

By upsetting our comfortable estrangement of *there* from *here*, these poems recognize that elongating our time on this planet is an act of imagination. It is through this same mechanism that I can come to understand that a water bottle I litter could be the very water bottle building out the edge of the Great Pacific Garbage Patch. Here becomes there becomes here again. Like the speaker in “Antarctic Moss,” we think the moss beautiful whether or not it’s a harbinger of warmer climes. So Samuels frustrates this beauty, *there-ing* what’s here and *here-ing* what’s there.

Samuels’s prepositions let the sentence wind as an idea winds, and it’s in those prepositions that we land. Rarely in a sentence do we regularly land there, but Samuels forces our comfort in the preposition by using them atypically or where we least expect them to be. A preposition means *dependency*, means *change*. But so does a salmon striving upstream, a branch that is growing or just snapped.

In “Incongruous,” Samuels follows the bringing on of spring: everything *of* everything, “the light, greenish then green, issue of all/ the lush lawns north of,” and finally,

This is not of winter—this thickening film—but spring
and what we tell ourselves is necessary for a certain kind
of beauty.

Samuels’s preposition reminds me that it’s in dependency that ecosystems operate. In the preposition, its non-space, we are right where the grass is: waiting on the dirt and the water and the sun until we tip—green—into spring.

Samuels elaborates on her vantage point, too, throughout her poems by reminding us to look through the negative view—looking through what is *not*. In “Isle of the Dead,” the speaker imagines, transported underground, the rising tide under a seaside graveyard

Kestrel

bearing the bodies away, “No gate or wall.” In “Redrawing Various Maps,” Samuels writes,

Signs read the road is closed.
Though rather, the road is now no longer—
is a new slope into the sea.

What doesn’t exist anymore exists again. Samuels vivifies the absurdity of the scale of climate change when she writes about the not-here. After imagining into the empty spaces of what’s already extinguished, might we now turn back to what is still left and imagine it back into its flourishing?

Nature has no language, so how might the poet define, with accuracy, its speechlessness in speech? As Samuels writes, “[w]e watch it from the vantage . . .” So the vantage, itself, must be accounted for in the viewfinder. In *All the Time in the World*, Samuels accounts for it time and time again. The slowness of a caesura, the line loudly enjambed, the insistence toward what is *not* there, *not* here—these are among the poems’ tools, that we might come to them, waggle dance with their subjects, look for what they look for. We meet them right where they are.

