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Down East Maine

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DOWN EAST MAINE

Gibb David

It began with the long, silent drive past endless
lobster pounds and fishing towns that litter
the landscape of Down East Maine like seagulls
swarming a freshly pulled pot, like canvas tents
on the small island that was my summer home.

It was here where I first knew fear,
when a sick valve finally died and the tanks erupted
into the sky as all below lay sleeping, wakening
to the deafening explosion and unrelenting advance
of searing heat, enveloping hiking boots and sleeping bags
in its ardent fervor. Only a barren island
and a history of ashes left behind.

And it was here I walked the scorched earth
and breathed deep its tragic musk,
spread cool mulch over the blackened loam,
and watched as despair became hope and joists
became floors, and through this painful transformation
I began to understand.