claustrophilia
by Alyssa Froehling

somewhere i dug my heel into
as a child is now a grave for a hermit
crab dead behind the shiny picketed shell
of his home

and all the words i said back then
to my best friend on that shore
fell like sawdust and choked
all the fish below

i sing the best directly after
the heimlich maneuver
is performed on me

and i know somewhere
there are deer
in the ocean
floating

bloated with grains like poems
professing their love for the roads
they lost in the stretching
cat limbed winter

the roads they lost
love the breath of
raccoons and i

sleep shallowly
when the surface
inside of your lungs

has frozen
all the vessels over
into recluses

and all of the traffic quiet
behind the cracking
sandpaper window
of your skin
i want to knock the antlers from my head
even if that means hanging all december
in a woodshed with only the promise of water
snow brings to comfort me