

JACQUELINE KARP-GENDRE

Low Tide

Today the sea is sun-chronicled,
tiny waves tiptoeing *sur place*
out there at the shore's bright cleanswept edge.
Blackbirds testing the clear cut light
send flapping cries
out from the rugged pines
to meet the wide sweep of the bay.

Down from the promenade totters
an elderly pair; he—bent over
his red walking stick, she—hunched into her coat.
Expectant.
Heads twitching from side to side,
they observe the sand.
Now they advance. He slow and three-legged.
She fluttering back and forth toward the water,
keeping time with him.

Like some old oystercatcher,
he angles his long red proboscis
and stabs at the hard wet sand,
pokes at the morning's dishevelled jetsam.
She ruffles her neck
back into her grey fur collar—
a tired gull waiting for the tide to turn.