 Though I live in the land of 10,000 lakes, I’m already planning how I’ll thrive once Nestlé’s bought us out. The trickle through my swamp side plot is full of beaver scat, but where they took the popple out, oaks dug in and kept the sun from sucking dry the scrub. We’re not above eating the rodents here, but we know to let the beavers have their way. The real question is: who’s going to have to learn to use the gun? The old guy down the road says he’ll keep watch and isn’t afraid to shoot, but he’s sure to expire first, and what it means to be lucky changes by the hour. Most of us have never seen a bird like that said to guide sailors home, said to invite the most gratuitous acts, but the swamp will lodge whatever lasts long enough to come. Sooner or later everything will show up hungry, and the beavers are going to host. We approve the long gouges in the snow where they write their ancestral names. We go out now and sit on their mounds in awe, pray they’ll add volume every year,
and hope the lake they’re making
is on its way to something vast.
Don’t laugh, you with stilted houses
on the beach: We’re here to remind you
that catchy refrain is only a fragment
of the plague song kids unwittingly
sing. The rest is shot through with verbs
you’re going to want to recognize
when the time comes.