New Heat

poems by S. KRAVE
holding my breath won’t do

-Marthe Reed
is it too late

the leaves unfold, already singed
dust has blown away, exposing roots
unprepared for the new condition
and yet, somehow, I can’t
get the water out of my shoes

when tar dominates the air
the faceless figures speaking in tongues
will celebrate with ritual suicide
having converted their portfolios to cryptocurrency
with plans to pay off some new dog to be their guide

but the dog’s sense of smell is better than that

you wouldn’t be caught so foolish,
you clever dinosaur,
abiding the idioms and eating right, thinking
within you and without you
gut flora may be enough

will train travel be enough?
on the trail of disappearance
gone cold way later
in abandoned barns
out where the hay is adrift
ad nauseum, we worry at each other with words rectified after the fact by changes to the legal code and then we wheeze harder

AGH, too quick an exit! I ball up the bits of lint in my pockets and flick the product toward the gutter but a gust blows it off course and it lands near a duck’s nest, so I pick it up tear it to pieces and deposit them back in my pockets
pipeline #1

I line my pockets
with drips

to burn
of oil

slick
sliding

warm
down

vines
riverbank #1

a cloud of young mosquitoes—
still too young
to draw
my blood—
seems curious about
me, intruder in their muddy nursery

if I had come later
they would have risked their lives
to feed
but now, they are innocent
so, gently, I wave them off
when they land on my
soon-to-be-closed notebook
pipeline #2

I saw the image

high desert steel tubes
through neat piles
chipped of stones
chipped to fit

together approximately
riverbank #2

bunches of burgundy leaves
sprout from the ground
near where the creek pours
from a concrete tube into
the river, frothing up around
a duck calling for their mate

a branch cracks off a tree and falls
along the opposite bank

a sudden low ringing overtakes my ears
out the window #1

it snowed today
late April
a whole mess of white
on spring rooftops
riverbank #3

the creation of the nature-walk
first requires a partial damming of the river
with gravel, then the pouring
of concrete, the casting of metals
for the suspension bridge, the hoisting
and securing of those elements, the removal of the gravel

then, what was overrun will gradually
grow back and I will be
allowed to look at it
commute #1

along the way to my typical perch
I swerve to avoid being struck
by a reckless Nissan

I see the driver fidget
with something out of sight
that face of struggle
belies a sudden concern
far from here
pipeline #3

pushed around
by tectonic
lurches
our
pulverized
ancestral pulp
gnashed bones
ground
beneathly
riverbank #4

downstream a middle-manager with an investment stomps on a threat from below out of fear of retribution from above

a bud pops open and her bones fall out in the necrotic dark
was I posed here before?

seated neatly in the wash
of frogs hidden by the underbrush
a full red-breasted robin
hurls its welcome
the buds are beginning
on the thirteen
young silver maples
in the clearing
a literal pipeline

Enbridge punctured this
town subtly, no major announcements
no protests
and quietly though the forest
near the border near
the high physics lab
and the data center
these conduits for the flows deemed
vital by suit
for spectacle
when the time comes

you will wake up
in a cloud of ash and residual
  heat     heat
beckoning you to strike up
  another plan
for motion, for securing
  the necessities
  blackberries and gauze and
  if you can remember the look of it
  fresh camphor

--

you will get dropped into
a new scenario

a car radio will buzz
and pop, stripped of its trappings
of car and legible labeling
  it will be
or will be a time
that once
  would have been
baseball season

--
please gather the delicate bloom
a frost will settle
remember scars
need only
be slight
unluckily

--

you will need to dig
into soft earth
    wet clay
pack it together as the wall of a trench
note depth and average water level
dredge spillway, set lever
the apiary should sit on the high ground
the orchard will cradle your health

--

you will arrive at a sign
posted on a chain-link fence
declaring the importance
of a rule long abandoned
scrape away the paint and
read its red chips on your palms
like a constellation
commute #2

treading a narrow path through a slim stretch of forest it strikes me

the pools of gathered rain water are nearly permanent now

I bat away the knowledge of inaccurate memory

casual acceptance leaves me boiled

--

the tarmac of my mouth lands scraps of improbability: I spit the banal

tonight instead I’ll steal the slickest trick: low creep, like water

--

the corpus glows blue enough to be mistaken for phantom
commute #3

I step out into the sleet
the grey barely risen
it doesn’t take long
for my unkempt hair
to fall dripping
out the window #2

no sense to form of
future or past
pigly swelling brain
never been never will
be as big as thought
would have it

what character leads
into false weeds
cut down
out and in

out of the seafloor
and into the gas tank
and into the gulf stream
and into the marsh grass
and into the bird beak
and into the plumage
and into the larynx
and into the bronchus

out of the shale
and into the oven

out of the tarsands
and into the dairy section
    hanging floppy strips
an account for the public record

it may be the mud from the riverbank
smeared across my face
or the torchlight reflected in
    my eyes
that creates the many other vengeful
demons, multiform myth
pitted against an encroachment
    displaced memory

the meaning is in the glow of cave moss
speckling the night and dark water
obscurig the moment
    one becomes an otter and escapes
out the window #3

the wish of death is rising
to satiate the fear
that lies somewhere between
the responsibilities one feels one has
and the power one feels one lacks
riverbank #6
	his person, known
but unknown, ambles
along the right bank of a river
rejecting thought
in favor of skipping stones
riverbank #7

these bones here
porous there smooth
resting in cool
damp air as the clouds
break apart and two stars
take a breath before
submerging again
without value

I leave through
a gate, floating,
to recover
elsewhere the slip
of memory encased
by fog, but known
somehow to be
green and fragrant

I look to follow the monarch
but find the milkweed bare

a young soldier points me
through a scorched field
insisting I’ll come to
a citrus grove

since then I’ve acquired
an excess of peaches
I make of them
a solitary gift

I enshrine my knuckles
pressed against a gnarled trunk
its only name
to me what I give it
which it accepts
a minor abrasion
becomes more necessary
than I expected
while following the path
laid by immaterial beings

I recognize little but sense
this is the right direction
Kollektiv—2019

Omnia sunt communia