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A Reaction to the Doomsday Clock // Writing Your Obituary and Wondering if You Would Like It

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RACHEL BENEWAY

A Reaction to the Doomsday Clock

*January 22, 2015
—three minutes to midnight—
due to climate change.*

In blue woods, one
tamarack tree snacks
on tattooed sun. Some
cut their throats
to implore more 4x4s,
spreadsheets, keyboards.

In limbo, frogs bite
dogs. The house
atop the falls rains
only tumbleweeds,
no seeds. Look out
your bay window.

Your flowers now
sound like hurricanes,

in this place where clouds
mud streets and rights

swing deep
in hot ruin.

Oceans are plastic, the sky
smells like science.

Kissing to bruise says
a watering can
spewing gasoline.

Wavering from the soft unsaid,

what demands
importance
is a torment.

RACHEL BENEWAY

Writing Your Obituary and Wondering if You Would Like It

This is not the place to discuss the time you chucked
a *Playboy* magazine in my middle-schooler lap just for a hoot. No,
here your love for ugly dogs and riding lawn mowers is not important.
I do not mention how often I picture the last time
I saw you. Instead, I must write the year you were born,
and the one in which you ceased to exist. Then, I must fill in the years
with where you went to college and some of your hobbies,
but only the boring ones. This is not the place to tell of my dreams
where you lick gardens clean of weeds by the light
of a setting moon. There is no place, here, to note
that I've only seen my father, your only son, cry once
before, but now he listens to messages you left him weeks ago
and falls into fountain. How do I say this in a place
that does not care about the bang of your voice,
your neck, seldom seen without the snake of a scarf, the smell
of your house, your handwriting, slow wink, onyx rings, how much
I wish I had called, I wish
I had called, I wish I had called, the weight
of your hugs
and the size of your

hands.