

PACIFIC SOLITAIRE

R.J. Lambert

On long delay, the falling sky  
crashes Pacifically in tidal waves

off the wharf where beach commoners  
must resist it. A ship  
ships surplus cars and trucks to water

burial deeper than souterrain,  
beneath porpoises and water

mammals (no sirens per se,  
or siren song's muted  
by truck-frame whirl and eddy).

Decades hence, there's word  
of car-part afterlives:

the shipman grandson's dreams  
tether his father's father  
who slid machinery to sea where

cars awoke as from a slumber, took female  
form and sang to forlorn shipmen

of the day. In this as in his every dream  
a captive seal dies and lies like metal  
on the zoo pool's cement floor,

six thousand copper-plated weights  
gorged to gut-burst—

might as well a plane wing  
splitting the Pacific shallows with its arc,  
sunlit pennies set off like underwater sparks.

PROBABLE ROBIN

R.J. Lambert

On high our robin  
is the first spring bud to bloom

hung there among the trees  
like broken glass

catching light and rain  
drops

trucks don't slow for it  
too small to cut  
bicycles ride right past

his wings beat like spokes  
on playing cards—the Red King—

dirt predator  
softly stalking rhubarb corridors  
for small treasure:

mischief in bushes is his  
he plays the worm game alone

## YEARLONG ABROAD

R.J. Lambert

—for Dean

Brother/fighter,  
time competes for you.

A child's rhyme,  
threadbare, barren beyond  
our peers even:

girls with thin curls  
were blond in black & white,

smoke like fingers  
laying their heavy heads  
to bed.

If I've earned a holiday,  
give me your Spain

from all four poles, your Portugal,  
a continent widening  
in the belly of water.

Diving depths for rocks  
is a native danger, heretofore.

So tender a toreador:  
I have not  
worked all my life.