Matinicus from Mt. Ararat
George Bellows, 1916

Sabbaths, Mother forbade me play outdoors, her voice cadenced like wind
spirited with the Lord’s breath
upon the waters. She’d read
from Genesis, while I sat mute

and drew. This Sunday morning
a few gulls loft like prayers
above the rooftops still huddled
in sleep’s green shade. I’m grateful
for the ark that strands me here,

apart, deluged in delight. I count them
two by two, skiffs and sails, the windows’
blind eyes. For a while all the world
that doesn’t matter can lie distant
and drowned beneath this glorious blue.

Richard Foerster

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