Some things that come together in coming apart

How stuck am I on the polar ice caps
now that they’re not so much there as historical
novels people pretend to have read
but really, who has the time? Like it’s haveable,
time, like we can stop driving ourselves
to the market and crazy soon enough
to have anything left to claim for England. Melting things
on that scale beats the yo-yo I stoved to goo
and a spanking, someone
needs to come along and send us to bed
without supper. In our defense
we’re stupid, gullible, smelly, we’re not
stupid, that was mean and categorical,
we’re wired and emblazoned and impressed
by the singing of birds who are merely
shuttling air from one spot to another, holding it
as we do each other in a waltz
to let it go further on, where it must fend
for itself. These bits of song-air
and dance are changed forever, everything
is changed forever all the time, I’m not here,
I’m up ahead, running with my arms thrown back
to embrace how mild life seemed
when I first noticed light coming to rest
on my mother’s face. Creatures
who generally have trouble with story problems
may not be the organisms one should ask
to anticipate global warming. A car
about to be started in Poughkeepsie
is the tipping point, after that, all is fire
and water, all is lost: do you
shoot the driver, learn the backstroke,
enjoy long walks into the high ground?
I keep returning to the ice caps,
their vast calvings in my mind, TV stars
of our dissolution, my head
thunderous and cold and too small
for their wounds but well-suited
to my hair. The debate as I understand it:
it’s too late, it’s not too late. Smart people
agree we’re not that smart. Here are clouds again,
telling me they make this up as they go.
If we don’t owe it to ourselves to fix
what we’ve broken, we owe it to ponies.
That was manipulative, but I love ponies,
how they let our children
ride them in circles with helmets on in case
the circles fall.
See side

Mind as wave: whoosh. As wet. As yet thinking needs a dress to wear, what better look than sea green or sea foam, within never gets out without, how cool is that, that the sealed self’s not an option, hence the object of my affection’s conception. As in, I notice you on your boogie board, therefore I exist to see you’re bad at balance, a savant of oops. The fall’s all we’ve perfected, reaching for the apple with the words of our hands, the yums, the Henny Pennys at our disposal. I come onely, you two. Boo-hoo. Group hug, the all of us, this wave charging hard, foaming at the mouth, as if to slather with embrace.
Life

is so big. Eyelash in the salad. Aldebaran
light-years to the right
of the margaritas.

Five hundred thousand
new “jobless claims.” Quotes. Was Bonaparte a fool
or a genius? Yes.

Rates of currency exchange, thermal exchange,
chromosomal exchange. I begin
to fill up, as if I’m a glass
and the world is water, is rain
is storm. Backfire
I think is gunfire and gunfire
I’m sure is close.

The feeling that mysticism
is the only way to be polite, that the stick
fetches the dog. While I was masturbating,
more rainforest
disappeared. The feeling the sun is saying

do something.
The feeling it’s impossible
to know what to do. So there I was:
planting bulbs
for a greensudden spring,
dialing my congresswoman, blushing,
hanging up, redialing,
rededicating myself
to gestures, walking right up to the sky
and asking it please
to stay.

The slog
the trudge,
pushing the boulder the pie-chart the petition
up the mountain. Save the whales, 
the decibels, 
the Earth, 
the me. When I thought of life 
as climbing the shadow of a tree, 
I climbed.

When I thought of life 
as a race between words 
for empty and words for full, 
I was at the end of this poem.
Scenic Thanatos

Dog
fucking a dog
while a third
dog watches
outside of
Famoso beside
almond trees, some

of these fields
have been used
so hard
fertilizer
has turned
to salt, I am

driving
to LA
where I’ve never
been to tell you
it is lovely
sometimes
how eager
we are
to die

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BRCA1

She has the gene, the cytosine, adenine
her mother sister had, her sother
mister had, they’ve named the gene.

If I named a gene
I’d name it Gene, I knew a Gene,
brother to Greg.

We are like genetically
mice, tiny creatures with toes,
she is like genetically
87 percent likely
to have breast cancer, ovarian
cancer: ovum, Oppen, open, closed.

So come July, away with thee,
mammaries and ovaries, live together
in imperfect harmony . . .
it only takes a day to remove the real
and add, pick a word: prosthetic,
cosmetic, the faux breasts and the egg sacks
are just gone, call them the nothings,
the novaries.

And there I am/was
cringing, and there she is/was
smiling, touching my hand, saying nononononono,
this is a good thing, the best thing
the universe has come up with
since the wet kiss, I am taking
dialogic license there
but she was happy as a torch
in a Frankenstein flick.

The townspeople have gathered
to kill the monster.

It’s dark, but they have fire,
she has fire,
she’s going to kill the monster
that killed her mother, her sister, if I may pare-a-phrase
down to its essentials:

hurray.

But ouch.

Hurray.

But seriously: ouch.

And the world, one day, had a second sky,
a sky for just the sky
to stare up and deepblue
and into, and a lake for the lake
to dive giggling in
and doggypaddle across, and a new
and soon improved her
sitting there mid-life
grinning brights, grinning hard-core
and full-bore and seriously
madcap happy about a knife.