

JENNIFER WHALEN

If This Is a Clearing

Yet-tread grass,
woodland opening, sponge meadow,
door ajar in the center
of night.

If this is a clearing, can I capture it?
Like model ships, their intricate masts
encased in glass liter bottles;
build the vessel, then whistle form
to hold it.

Cling into me, clearing.
Shush-sway rudders your tongue.
Does your twitch long extension?
stay? does your absence feel the wind?
are you waveless?

My body is a fastened
clasp-latch thing. Can I be a broad pardon,
my own long glade?

And if I've mistaken this expanse,
if my eyes prove sour-watchers,
if this stretch is, in fact,
a separation,

I see the trees on its edges move.
Let me better approach them.