

Senior Division, Poetry

E C Daley, St. John's

On the Occasion of Her Son's Birthday

Not that anyone pays much mind anymore, she tells him,
but over the barn, day is breaking blood red.

She's been following the protests...

he tells her, gulls here
need hardly come back to the shore,
weather not nearly so harsh.

So gulls read the sky but not the signs of the times.
She insists, look out at the leaves, the grass;
everything everywhere is subject to fall.

He asks after hers... She feels him go
quiet. Knows he had a friend at that festival,
another who was the very grass mowed in Gaza...

He thanks her for the treasury of terms for ice and snow;
laughs at how close an eye was once kept
on the back pond's *young ice*.

She reminds him, habits are hard broken
and would you believe a new neighbour just gifted her
a white tea rose: "On the Occasion of Your Son's Birthday".

He hears also the small break in her voice,
asks after the cats, assures her
he knows she loves him.