

LAURA PAUL WATSON

Love & Hypothermia

First, it will feel like surprise. Like the edge of something
unconsidered: a glass let go; an open palm;
how cold a mouth can be and still say *love*,
still say *okay*.

Shore is a hundred yards away,
maybe two, and on its edge a thousand stones
will watch us work and stall in the water.

This
is when the vessels narrow in our hands,
when the blood retreats and pauses in the heart.

This is when, across the bay, a single chimney
will rise from a single house. In its hearth, a fire.

The water, we will say, is a slow hand
closing. A clouded stone. The cloudless sky,
a cruel cliché. What is left for us to say?

By the time we land in the aluminum heart
of the boat, we are mackerel-blue, stupid,
and something in each of us has opened to the other.