

Abigail Bottome

Hurricane

The wind howls across the sky
Trees genuflect like priests
Leaves of the old oak quiver and shake
Whitecaps press against the swell

Fear of falling branches, hot wires
moors me indoors.

Inside: the clock stops.
Darkened rooms wait to resume
familiar function, mark time
until the tick tock tick
begins again and these spaces retreat—
mere stage for distracted motion
tasks performed in repetition

Notice: the shadowed cupboard
the blue bowl on the shelf
the knife on the counter where you left it
when the lights went out

This lull in routine
Reminds me to feel myself
bones, muscle, teeth.

Eyes search gray clouds
seek clues about my family
scattered fragile in their bodies
living too within the rituals—
daily life and local emergency.

We avoid the brunt of the storm
until we don't then shed
complacency
learn new habits.
Torn from snug harbors
Soar into vapor and mist
This surprising fickle world.

Abigail Bottome was born in Brooklyn New York, attended Boston University, and received B.A. and M.A degrees from Goddard College and a Ph.D. from the Union

Institute. The coastal salt marshes of northern Massachusetts, near where she has lived for many years, were the subject of her dissertation, *Walking in Great Marsh*. She has particular interest in poetry and essay writing that addresses the natural world. Her poems have been published in the Larcom Review, Endicott Review, Ibbetson Street, Somerville News, Portfolio, and Watershed Journal.