Their two faces match
the sand itself
as they sit on a bench
staring outward
toward the calm ocean
beyond the harsh angles
of the cottage,
the gray cement deck,
the dull green bench.
The sea looks as if
it will never move again.

A chain linking
two gray pilings
is as stiff as the frozen
rectangles of towels
on their line.

They have quarreled
or worse
they have not quarreled
but have arrived
at this stony place

from a long line
of grievances,
like beach trash heaped
higher and higher
until gulls, waves,
the wind haul it all
piece by piece away—
brack and kelp, shells,
the flesh of dead fish,
sand, bones.

Only twin jettys
of rock remain.