

## ***One Poem***

Kendra Bartell

### **On My Leaving All This**

If a historic drought can't get us to talk  
about the taste of salt water,  
the freedom to have a suntan,  
I'd rather be a hard rock  
than open my mouth.

I was terrified they'd be tired after  
letting me leave the trees,  
turn over the fresh pages  
of notation, these leaves, a choreography for a job.

Instead, they spent the time reasoning  
how a hand knots itself, how the sky holds  
its heart intact, the sound  
of the syllable *god*.

They'd rather be home, but it  
reminds me of a heavy tiredness  
and forgetting to have clean clothes, this  
sense of the wonderful and I am  
leaving all of them behind.

This all depends on their travelling, travelling,  
travelling and not looking through me.  
I am afraid I would miss them.

If I am the problem then I like it,  
walking barefoot on a tender path  
and falling asleep in the uncensored moment.

This is how you come back to see—  
now, gods, stand up  
and wring your two hands together  
and Oh, just say to them, remember how to write a poem.

