

## Soul of the Instrument

And now the voice again; voice of a boy  
in an 83 year old man.

But you are a boy no longer:  
where has your baritone gone?

High-pitched, souring in the sun.

Now no more  
gut-shaking rumbles, lava pouring from stone, is that  
you in there?

Some measure themselves in croaks.

But you were profligate, throbbing:  
abundant as the Missouri, has soul changed its residence?

Only a few strings left  
to the bow that sweeps across the rib-cage.

What's happening to them, the silky  
deep winds that used to swell your shirtfront?

Slats whimper and creak  
like a fence in winter:

how we press ourselves together.

Though the gravel that rattles the voice-box  
is neither young nor old, out there

crackling across cold  
empty continents

we keep talking to each other, please  
as long as we can, in the static

of atoms drifting towards no life, no love  
in particular; the last radios left calling

from an ice floe in the Antarctic.