

**JENNIFER BORGES FOSTER**  
**[Sew together the brittle leaves]**

Sew together the brittle leaves and wait for wind.  
Hold the blank sheet, stay the fastfortunate tearing,  
linger for the messages the breeze declines to bring  
in its haphazard push; wait and watch the world's  
waneslope, tugbonnet, give and take, take.

I hear we are lonesome but languishing more  
is the bitter spill at the bottom of the cup—  
imagine you uncurl like tea  
to find no mouth wants the tobacco strandishness of you,  
you are smokecertain and cooling as morning  
gives way to other wishes.

The Frenchman packs his boxes with such deliberate sorrow  
and somewhere my ancestors are cellcycling into something  
we could call purpose or mastmatter,  
the bow of a ship breaking around Cape Horn  
centuries past Sephardic escape.

Fall asleep in the bath and wake to the smell of green,  
the hanging plant made dappled glass of you  
when the steam and small wind  
met its tender articulations,  
littering you pretty in rest,  
arranging you as the innate patina of inclement fate.

My mother's mother was made twice  
when the ship carved its shoulder into the green side  
of paradise—this morning one of her called me wanting matzo  
while the other sucked a wooden toy in a lavamade grave,  
still knowing herself better by the smell of goatsoap  
and the choking sound the wheel made in a rut  
when the hospital was too far from home.

The only storm called perfect  
takes from itself first  
and will leave you with the debris of a scattered life—  
sew together the brittle leaves and wait for wind,  
for the chiming sound of a home  
still audible in the fogpath of fleeing.