ELECTRIC

Janet read me a story in my kitchen,
little whispets of chalk stuck in her teeth.
I made aspic in the sink, and listened well.
Janet watched her lover starside my palm.
At a party we danced together, sexless.
Janet read Foucault by firelight.
She spoke to me of bay leaves, her mother’s silver
of never wanting children.
Janet was a virgin until she wasn’t.
After that there was no name for her.
NOTES FROM A PARK IN GREENVILLE

What I had left were remnants—dull squirrels, an aging, pinkish dog reflecting next to me on a bench. We sat

and watched another woman on a bench, her November man trying to kiss through the wool of her yellow scarf. She pointed to her rusted watch, and I imagined him explaining time as motion, or lack of said motion. Two hands, lined up on a clock face—a still life. “Have you noticed,” He’d say to her, “that it’s only when your back is turned they appear to move?”

They left, and I could see her hand slipping into his pocket. What a surprise for the girl when she’d feel the rotted peach hidden there.

It was, he could’ve
replied, Novembering—
the brown cores
of summer fruits,
wet acorns
on the ground, breath
of the mutt besides me
which was warmer than
anything. I pulled him
onto my lap, and when
the November dusk
settled, we were
all that was left.
THIRD PLACE

Katie Hibner

Will I Hang Owl-Man?

He docks his ferry in the midst of traffic;

   yes I find comfort in the oak
crooks of elbows, a Crucible hot tub
where this owl-man can’t harpoon
his mind, or rather his mud;
he stows his snake carefully,
dips into its lemon-feed,
shakes off the surfaces of the Nantucket vignette
in which I saw sunlight lope around his ears, oh
   dear Abigail Williams
I wish you were here.