

albert goldbarth

OUR PLACE

Whatever it was we didn't hear — some pitch
the human ear can't catch — the dogs did,

and the night became their opera, scored for howling.
Or the bees: they maze through flowerscapes

the edges of the summer light make visible for them
(the way acoustic ricochet makes space

apparent to the bat) that *we'd* bump
headlong into or step from and plummet.

These platitudes about our place in the animal world
occasionally comfort me when I think how

my wife's head, after all this time, is really still
a capsule from another planet, sent to mine

with dreams inside, and algorithms, and sets
of assumptions, intended to test the limits

of my senses. Every morning there she is,
a mystery-aura'd visitor on whom the trees of the front yard

dapple the light: her breasts, her shoulder blades. I mean
the light we see by, that we call "the light"

although of course the other light, the greater light,
is wings on either side.