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.