I never would have guessed they were so pushy, shoving each other at the edges of their tank as if our outstretched, soap-washed hands could turn them over to face the stars.

I think I saw one smirk before he splashed my nephew with a magician’s well-rehearsed sleight of . . . fin?

Wing? Cape? What is the world hiding with its moon-dark flank and ciliated underbelly?

Even I who still live by the fingertips that caressed the creature’s slippery-slick bone because – how can I explain this? – it told me I had better, else the guiding voice cold-shoulder us to a plunging misapprehension of space behind the wheel, or in the glass tunnel where the sharks bare their glassy teeth . . .

I’ve been known to circle the block, having failed to recognize the climbing ivy, shutters and terra cotta shingles of my own house.

Am I obligated to pay dearly for my lack of planning? I watch
hours of traffic sink like sediment
and harden into bedrock.

Bladder full, I squirm and curse and try to catch
a truck driver’s eye of sympathy, but no use.

I belong miles below, and miles behind
the overnight world. Overnight, yes —
it is in this way, I am told,
I cannot be expected to change.