

The Current Isolationism

By Camille Rankine

In the half-light, I am most
at home, my shadow
as company.

When I feel hot, I push a button
to make it stop. I mean this stain on my mind
I can't get out. How human

I seem. Like modern man,
I traffic in extinction. I have a gift.
Like an animal, I sustain.

A flock of birds
when touched, I scatter. I won't approach
until the back is turned.

My heart betrays. I confess: I am afraid.
How selfish of me.
When there's no one here, I halve

the distance between
our bodies infinitesimally.
In this long passageway, I pose

against the wallpaper, dig
my heels in, catch the light.
In my vision, the back door opens

on a garden that is always
in bloom. The dogs
are chained so they can't attack like I know

they want to. In the next yard
over, honeybees swarm
and their sound is huge.

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