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5/21  
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Before the Bridge

My hair  
Whips in the wind  
As we float  
In the harbor  
While the fleet  
Slices through  
The hypothermically  
Frigid water

Looking into  
The utterly simple  
binoculars  
Which enlarge  
The world around me  
I see a ship  
Carrying cargo  
The grain, iron  
Or coals  
Being loaded  
Ready to face  
The unpredictable  
Rage of the waves

I hear the rush of water  
As a ship  
Empties the ballast  
The excess  
Crashing against  
The surface  
If I looked  
Close enough  
I might find  
Clumps of  
Zebra mussels  
Spilling out  
Known for  
Being aquatic  
Hitchhikers

A sea lamprey  
May be under  
The glasslike  
Surface  
Lurking in the  
Shadows  
Waiting to  
Suck the life  
Out of its  
next prey

A rip current  
Sweeps away  
At the sand

Pulling whatever  
Comes in its path  
Far from the shore  
And out to the  
Depths of the lake

Today  
The clouds seem  
To encompass  
Everything  
With their  
Heavy  
Sadness  
Still  
The lift bridge  
Glimmers like stars  
Making a  
Passageway for  
Ships every day  
An estuary of  
The Saint Louis river

