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Three Poems

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The Gulls

Those small cries—gulls in the distance—
despairing. Every morning we hear them
voice images from unremembered dreams.
Such moods wing through us and fly off.

Now we are bereft, almost empty.
As if at last a great wind had toppled
the oak next door, the one that's broken
at the top. Such space where it stood.

The Gentlemen Are Back

They announce their return
with truncated song—notes
broken or stretched, tuneless.
Insouciant in black hoods

and woodland grey cloaks,
waistcoats the colour of
tomato soup, they parade
and strut, keeping a certain

distance from each other.
Transgress that distance and
be greeted by flinging of arms,
a sudden tantrum and holler.

Heads cocked, they dart
and pause, listen and glean.
They know you're watching.
Their sharp black eyes give

nothing back.

Reflection (Great Egret)

thin long bird
meets itself
long white neck
darting to long white neck
retrieving the slender fish

hermit in ragged coat
treading the wavy
cloud-flecked blue sky
intent on what moves
below reflection
bird
lifts one foot
leans
and steps
then again
ruffling the muddy bottom
into ripple

and gap

expanding

long thin bird

wings exploding

takes flight

wings exploding

long thin bird expanding

into ripple and gap ruffling

the muddy bottom

again

then steps

and leans lifts one foot above reflection

intent on what moves in cloud-flecked sky

hermit in ragged coat treads the wavy blue

retrieves a slender fish long white neck

darting to long white neck

thin long bird meeting itself

MAUREEN SCOTT HARRIS, a Toronto-based poet and essayist, has published three collections of poetry: *A Possible Landscape* (Brick Books, 1993), *Drowning Lessons* (Pedlar Press, 2004), which was awarded the 2005 Trillium Book Award for Poetry, and *Slow Curve Out* (Pedlar Press, 2012). She has also published a chapbook, *Waters Remembered* (espresso, 2016).