Two Poems

David Martin
Plastiglomerate

This mountain
swells
with unfurled
terrane tides.

This mountain
pickets the continental
divide.

This mountain lords
its frozen
obligatos over
range-road staves.

This mountain writhed
out of the surf to stack
its fins.

This mountain corrals
river riots
and breakers battering
the roots.

This mountain
bullies ocean
airs into gambling away
savings,
crows
as they sulk
shirtless, parched
down the lee-side
exit from town.

This mountain’s
a suck-up to sun’s
aspect angle,
self-conscious of its
latitudinal rusticity.

This mountain
syphons lung
bellows.

This mountain’s the shredded
sin-shell

marooned after the yolk

flooded a mundane

world.

This mountain coerces

gorgon wannabes

into fermenting

mineral memory.

This mountain

chaperones us to a vacated beach,

where we ransack forensic rucksacks and sacrifice a drained Fanta to the flames of a new fate.

We fret the plastic silhouette in fishing nets, torture form in fire, bury the effigy under sandcastles so it will hatch molecular hook-hands to wrangle bilious basalt cloak its hunks of coral shivs

and snuffed shells.

While we doze, bottle is abducted by subduction, and in deep-time dreams the artificial moment is our contribution to the lithic record, signing a hale and farewell from the bedrock to the future.
Plastiglomerate

(a metamorphic translation)

thismountaingrowswithwavestoprotestdivisionandhangsitsicy
notesoverbackroadsthismountaintwistedoutofthewatertomas
sitstailsandlockupriverfreeforallsattackingthereoostthismountain
troublesseaairsintokickingawaymoneyythismountainsabrown
nosertosunangleselfconciousofitsdistantssimplesssthismount
aindrainsbreathwindsthismountainsawastedcoverleftafterthe
eegyellowsbursttheearththismountainforcesthosewhodesired
angerintocookingupjewelmemorythismountainiguidesustothes
andwherewecombbookbagstoofferadrainedbottletotheflame
swelineitinfishingnetsdamageformfirecoveritundersandhous
essoitwillgrowhookhandstoroundupangledstonedressitsbodie
sofseabladeswhilewerestearthplatesrunoffwiththebottleandin
deepetimesleepthefalseminutewisourpresenttotheicerecordsigni
ngagoodmorningandsolongfromthebedtothefuture
Note on the Text

“Plastiglomerate (a metamorphic translation)” is an adaptation of the preceding poem into a simplified language called Basic English (created by linguist C. K. Ogden), which contains only 850 words. The poem mimics the crystalline structure of foliated metamorphic rocks that have been subjected to extreme pressure and heat at tectonic zones of subduction.

DAVID MARTIN works as a literacy instructor in Calgary. His first collection, Tar Swan (NeWest Press, 2018) was a finalist for the Raymond Souster Award and the City of Calgary W. O. Mitchell Book Prize. His work was awarded the CBC Poetry Prize in 2014.