

August 2, 2022

a poem by Kelsi Lindus

Thank you note

On my birthday
my mother brought me a piece of cake.
Thoughtful, I thought, but I was sad.
We sat on the deck.
Is that a bald eagle swimming? she asked.
We put on our glasses.
Walked one house over to get closer.
Descended the stairs to the beach.
It was a bald eagle, swimming.
In all our years here, we'd never seen it.
The heft. How it paddled its weighted wings.
Slowly, onerously, again and again.
When it got to shore, a fish flapped
between its talons, then went still.
The bird gripped it, lifted—
too much—folded back to the sand.
My mother taught me to send thank you notes.
I'm grown now and don't; usually, I don't.
What I'm trying to say is,
the eagle was bringing the fish to its nest.
All that effort. All that water.
Wing after weary wing without break.
What I'm trying, mother, to say is,
thank you for the care.
Thank you for the cake.