LOUISE GLÜCK

THE TREE HOUSE

The pail droops on chain, rotten,
Where the well’s been
Rinsed with bog, as round and round
The reed-weed rockets down Deer Island
Amid frosted spheres of acid: berry pick-
ing. All day long I watched the land break
Up into the ocean. Happened long ago,
And lost—what isn’t—bits of jetty go
Their private ways, or sink, trailing water.
Little’s left. Past this window where
My mother’s basil drowned
In salad, I can see our orchard, balsams
Clenched around their birds. The basil flourished on
Neglect. Open my room, trees. Child’s come.