

## What We Have Known

Joanna Newsom

The tadpole buoyant as basalt  
The seahorse horsing in assault  
The owlet in his greenery  
The narwhal in his cup of sea  
They all believe  
They all believe

But collusion bleeds through back alleys  
From parapets that end on feet  
When one is weak they discretely meet  
They throw the bones into the street  
And they progress  
And we retreat

And all the books our fathers wrote  
Are in the middle of the road  
Little by little, we implode  
History brittle, brown and broke  
We can't remember what was spoke  
So we stare in wonder at the smoke  
What it begets is born alone  
We know not now what we have known

Ladies, breathe deep against your whalebones  
For your children come home made of stone

The terror seething sees a way  
Or like the wheezing of the bay  
In miniature agonies  
They travel westward on the breeze  
Bring us all to our knees

The dappled horse, the sorrel mare  
With eyes that do not see but stare  
Beneath boots as black as malachite  
He drives the nag into the night  
Into the night

And all the baby boys we've born  
With eyes averted from the storm  
Sent off to die in perfect form  
We know now what we have known

Satellite photos rhetoric  
See how the euphemisms stick  
And when they come back broke and burned  
Those who return have no return