

# HUSK (MASKS)

ERYN GREEN

We pretended  
it was the first time  
we'd thought about them

And how they were *good*  
at effacing our lippy sneers  
which we said we meant  
to be read  
as smiles

We behaved exactly like seamstresses  
all so brightly tied  
to our work, like it  
sanctified anything  
about us, so much  
like our fathers  
and how obviously  
it didn't

Down the street, when the lights  
died out, our neighbors started to shine

We didn't know anyone lived  
in those houses anymore, already  
in hiding, always made to approach  
the book differently, aware  
of the veneer and its solvent  
vulnerability. Didn't they stand  
taller in those days. Didn't they  
dance with a kind of grace  
that can only come from exposure

Didn't we bathe ourselves in shame  
some of us, at least—

Didn't the windows look out  
onto the lake as a kind of ice  
spread across its face, only in May  
which was our worry, worrying

Didn't they dance

# SHELL (WAIMEA)

ERYN GREEN

I was having a real hard time

gearing myself—

like Greg Noll

on a day nobody photographed

outside the lineup. At home

it smelled like Big Sur

after rain, almost too much

to bear. Such truth foremost alone

separated my days. Nobody came

to the new house. All our parties shook

out. It all took so much *place*. When I awoke

to the woods midway through

I asked myself *what kind*

*of cairn*—felt so facile

for the asking. Feathergrass  
grown overnight, become abode

for the smallest breeze. I tried to  
take notice. Cacti we thought

were dead moved darkly  
entirely new angular leads. I wanted—

we all wanted—to be  
someone better, a bright spot

on a wave where the sun breaks  
through rain. And no one is watching.

Why not go to the coast? I had topaz  
and citrine eyes. I had two hands

holding on to mine. Why not  
become a ghost? It is only sad

we imagine if  
the haunted places

all gone, we all that remains