An Exact Lady

She is a boat
with a unique sail
yoked to the kit house
over there on the beach

She is a dirt driveway
small shells litter the grass
and in the dirt beneath
somewhere worn and poor
a loose iron nail dreams

She is a freestanding column
about twenty feet tall
away from a stone wall
where the oak leaves stop drifting

She is a book
but on every page
someone else’s name
lights up

She is a dog in another life -
all the Woods Hole black dogs
sing her name
as they lope down Water Street

She is a mole
that has lived for a hundred years
under her living room floor -
the mole is part of the weather

She is an Exact Lady
like the waves
like a folded photograph
like a pine breeze
like an ice saw in a shed
like a Dutchman’s Pipevine
like stained glass
like a looking glass looking back

Like every Exact Lady
she has a brick road
and you’d better meander it
and there’s a wren ahead of you

Do you see that butterfly
going to sip at the museum
flowerbeds?
That’s her
before she is now
as yet unspecified
as yet not history
as another exact moment
worthy of our best effort
the best attention
of our best selves.

Eric H. Edwards
A Woods Hole Poet