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## **In The Shapes Of Animals** Kathleen McGookey

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**Kathleen McGookey**

IN THE SHAPES OF ANIMALS

Today we are helpful and smiling when necessary. I don't say how much is wanted. How much the rain stays in the air after a storm, how white pages blow up around the bridge downtown. And the river. And the bride whose sheath dress is unaccommodating. We all love a bride because...she made a choice? It's almost too much to take, this exaggerated sense of responsibility, plants that grow to the height of a man. A day is a page to write on, to turn. To turn over to someone else. Listen, you do what you can, but I mean to let my gray cat sleep all over my notebooks. I am not the kind of woman who throws a husband's clothes all over the sidewalk, or runs up huge credit card bills. Though it is in my family. There are several stages: the last is hiring a maid to answer the phone and inform callers of the reality of your choosing. This same luck can deliver unhappy fantasies, something dragged from the sea. A proposal turned down, the heart's fabric into stone, into grief, weightless grace. And the thoughts that come to us regularly in the shapes of animals? I would have counted them all but they don't keep still. Remember, someone will always be quick and willing to point out what is lacking. No one here is singing to the fish, though they are surfacing anyway, they are emerging in their best skins to meet us.