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## Toward the Eastern Seaboard

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Houle: Toward the Eastern Seaboard

# TOWARD THE EASTERN SEABOARD

ADAM  
HOULE

The town where our parents moved us  
fringed a tall and darksome city.

Not the town they promised.  
My sisters and I grew furious.

We grew like thistle in the steady north's  
shade. We stole and shattered glass

at every chance, slammed our father's  
three-pound sledge on Mason jars

we cradled from off the pantry shelves.  
When our mother's back was turned

from her work at the stainless double sinks,  
and the high-set kitchen window framed

our legs shredding air past the swings,  
we practiced the middle finger,

that singular piston rising.  
Rage our new order. Our eyes shone

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like polished steel, flecks of metal  
spreading. We learned to bristle

like wild dogs, cleaved little spirits  
of coal, of indomitable industry.