

A Thousand Possible Clouds



Go find a pencil
the world is a terrible first draft.

When you write a story, you have choices—
horizon, chickweed, loneliness,

a copse of trees harbors soldiers
stealthily as a virus invades a body

or holds redwoods, gentle as grandparents,
collecting their centuries in a map of pale rings.

Listen, a foghorn beyond the fields
moans like an animal suffering

the sky has surrendered its hours
or exploded into a thousand possible clouds.

The children on the road far behind you
have lost their parents, their country—

someone got too greedy
someone believed he knew what was right.

Or they're your children on that road
carrying home blackberries to make cobbler—

cut the butter into the flour, stop to kiss
the swirled crowns of their heads.