

R e t t r e a t

The beach house has only been empty a week,
but already the spiders

have established their residence in the corners
of every room.

This is the first task when we arrive:
sweep the webs down

while their makers scuttle across the plaster to a crack
where they can outwait us.

After an hour we will turn our backs, abandon the cup
we use to catch them,

and they will start over again. It's their house
as much as ours

and after dark, in this bedroom community
where the train calls

each hour, reminding us of those who come and go
while we shake

the day's sand from our shoes; even
these two blocks from the lake

the ululation of a loon will fill the silence
that follows the train

and we will stop talking, who have done nothing
but talk all evening.

Susanna Lang