

national poetry month

Poem in Your Pocket Day

West of Key West

from the forthcoming chapbook *Ten Counties Away* by J. Todd Hawkins

the lanterns along the pier were impatient by twilight
glinting off lacquered swells, gem-red, gem green

while she stared to the gulf
past the silken blue seam
of unbroken horizons
and walked out slowly
until the sea
took her legs,
her oiled shoulders,
safely, the way screen doors in summer
permit only a perfect breeze

she was alone in the ocean
searching out the moon:

even when we were naked,
she still wanted to be skinless

moonsick ghostcrabs
bled through seafoam
onto sugary beaches a second before
being dragged back to the breast of earth.

we are precious *now*, I tried to explain

yet, even awash in ocean tide
sand somehow finds a way inside