Sailing Stones

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Abstract
2018 Winner of the Peter Sears Poetry Prize

Keywords
Peter Sears Poetry Prize, poetry

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Sailing Stones

Madeleine Hannah, Western Oregon University  
Faculty Sponsor: Dr. Henry Hughes

2018 Winner of the Peter Sears Poetry Prize

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In secret, they creep  
across the cracked earth

dark and bulky, jarring  
against the flat bleached playa,  
obvious, they glide unseen

a fleet of contradictions,  
they sit sated and serene  
in the valley of death

they voyage unaided,  
untroubled by man  
or beast

only the wise, wheeling stars  
by which they navigate  
witness their passage.

Sometimes I worry I’m icebound  
or stuck in stagnant slime

but frost and mud  
provide their own arcane  
locomotion

even rocks  
leave wake in the desert.

“Though no one has ever seen them actually move in person, the trails left behind the stones and periodic changes in their location make it clear that they do.”
-National Park Foundation