

The Plovers

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have returned
their nests surrounded
by small circular fences
of plastic netting.
The signs are back:
“This area off limits
to people and pets”.
How speedy, their matchstick legs,
comical, their bobbing heads,
urgent, their hunt for food.
How thin, the shells of the eggs
upon which the mother
waits for a hatchling brood.
Last year, one, only one
pecked its way into the light.
Does it matter if this year
none make it? In time,
this beach will be a mountaintop.
Plovers gone.
Signs gone.
Plastic netting decomposed
into constituent polymer molecules.
Creation shrugs, grand and indifferent
in the long and longer run;
but we, mopping up
in the dog days of the anthropocene,
we want our efforts
to protect these plovers to matter.
We want a happy ending.