

hTo the owners of plush summer cottages
Scarlet Labbé-Watson

I hope that soon you will
Sit on your veranda on your cottage on the coast
And you will see a " piping plover "
Mother and baby
Gangly legged, wobbling '
Across the sand
You will remember what they look like
But too often they are forgotten
Too soon they might be gone

I will admit to you
I know little of piping plovers
I will admit to you
I don't think I've seen one

But I have seen our sand dunes dwindle
To you, I'll say
Summer cottages along the beach
have exploded
People building the elite houses
On foundations of sand
On the place of the plovers

I do not know exactly
But I think if my home
Was among the sandy grasses
Along Popham Beach
And my home was turned
Into ' lavish cottages
I can tell you I would,
Like the plovers waste away
How would you explain?
How would you justify it?
Would you tell me that
The wealthy need to escape the busy city life?
Would you say it is
For their mental health?
Would you tell me that at least now they can connect to the ocean?

If I told you, the plovers'
Nests were drowning

If I said their carefully constructed homes
We're being washed out to sea,
how would you feel?
Not what would you think or say or do,
But how would you feel?
I feel heartbroken
Heartbroken that our love
of the illusive wilderness has
Lead us to infringe on it
Heartbroken that our inept
Attempts at reconnection
Have caused extinction
Heartbroken I don't know enough, yet still
Know too much
Heartbroken that maybe you
have never heard of a piping plover

But perhaps someday you will sit
On your crumbling porch sinking into the sea
And wonder where these birds are
Tiny bundles of fluffy feathers and energy
Perhaps you will miss them