

## Waterlog

He's circling the moat, his forearm  
gliding through the weight of the water,  
fluid, fluent, and I float in his wake.

*Everywhere liquids move in rhythms*  
he says, his pen never lifting  
from the page, my fingertips

following the braille  
of his thoughts, mirroring  
the movement of his hand,

my ungloved fingers feeling  
their way into his words,  
as though rubbing a scar.

*An oyster is a series of ripples*  
*where a stone was thrown in,*  
the words whisper, our fingertips

separated only by a sheet  
of paper. I make my way through  
the layers of his life, manuscripts

tangled up with contact details,  
hold his work with invisible kid gloves  
as though handling vintage gowns

folded into cardboard boxes  
and stacked away like new shoes.  
I wade in deeper. He writes,

*Digging the potatoes at Mellis, I put*  
*my hand in the soil and am*  
*surprised to find how warm it is.*

I wonder what remains of this life.  
Would anyone answer if I called  
those numbers? I come across

his friend's address, on my street,  
and when I follow the numbering  
the building is boarded up,

the doorway a shelter,  
with evidence of last night's bedding.  
A life measured in cardboard boxes.