



Extirpation

Who planned this reservation?
Who plotted out its straight, unnatural edge?
The border, not a river or crest—
a line drawn once, firmly, with a ruler.

No one taught this history in our school.
No child asked the question. I inherited
the surveyor's answer, complete
with missing birds, catalog of avians

no longer seen within the territory:
Night Heron, Marsh Wren. Not extinct—

extirpated. These birds follow water.
They have no reason to visit anymore.