The Loch at Harray

We glide out, dip the oars,
barely disturb the water

or each other. Light opens
the end of the loch,

the reeds, and the bubbles of flies
shaving the dark flat surface.

Breeze lifts your fringe, soothes skin.
The trout avoid us

in the shallows, but we see
them cruise. Our bloodstained

hooks lie untouched. September;
we might not come back again.

The sun cools even as we slide along.
Soon it will be the equinox,

a long dive hard to imagine.
The loch turning into a cold place –

white metallic. The grey fingers
of standing stones on the ridge

pointing to a smudged sky. Nothing
has been quite as clear for months.

Julie-ann Rowell