

There's confusion in the land, but

here's an answer:

*This momma-house (no dogs permitted)
is storm-tossed cloths hung on dry
lines between poles. What's the question?
When will you leave it? Not this spring,*

with your boils already blooming.

**This past winter,
the authorities leveled a 300-year-old
dune left out of their promise of land.
A critical crack: shifting ground**

**makes for a bumpy ride, the kind of test
nothing in school can teach you. So far
at least you kids are still okay: little
hillocks of joy in a beach-grass act,
playing it safe on the lit-up sand.**

**Remember your test number. Because
sooner or later it's sayonara, all you kids
in your sunsuits. Whatever your grade,
you too get to hide in the ground.**

Gone-by news

**First, the death of God, the one
with the upper-case name. Old,
still alive when his feet trod
his primeval waters, he held on until
a bit of land came by, grew firm.
Fish drew near, tested the ground,
climbed on. Became animals.
Land became Earth, the animals roamed,
one stood on its hind legs, another,
the two gave birth
to others who stood. Then
two forked animals who spoke. The Word:
apple, choice. The world went still.**

A man of parts

And his pin-striped shirt and silky tie and dark fine-wool suit, his shined shoes, his fedora brushed and blown, his briefcase full of case files. And so thus was he fully warped and woofed, man of presence and parts, his body spindle-wound and ready for the day to unspool it.

And the snowy Belfast linen napkin he tucked (at lunch in the restaurant next to the reflecting pool with fountainous Nereids playing at dance) into the collar around his goose-fleshed neck that rose to be gripped by his head.

And the gold family-crest ring that caught a beam of chandelier light as he dipped his fingers into the fresh-water pond in the crystal finger bowl.

Later, his shoes dimmed with the day's dust, faint wrinkles in his trousers, sulky shirt blousing above his belt, his full polished briefcase, his fedora ready to be tipped to ladies and clergymen.

Still later his dinner, the moonlight glowing on the terrace, the nightly bowl of milk for the unreflective cat, its unbearable thirst as it drank.