

Antiphon

A weakened hurricane
still packing a mean enough wind
flings a nest from the old maple
grounding two green heron chicks
homeless on my land.

Long, yellow legs, elongated triangular
beaks, their tiny black eyes
stare straight at me.
One opens its mouth achingly wide
as if I might be a huge heron
come to feed.

Though unable to touch or feed them,
I try to speak their language,
 kuck kuck kuck
as if my own survival is bizarrely linked to theirs,
 kuck kuck kuck
 finally resort to mine
 Hello babies
 Stay safe.

On our southern border
hundreds of children fleeing their homes,
lullabies in Spanish
on concrete floors
in our land.

The old rocker from my Dakota childhood
now sits in my living room.
If that chair were on the Tex-Mex border,
I'd put all those kids on my lap,
my own survival linked to theirs,
and rock them and croon
in my language, not knowing theirs
 Hello babies
 Stay safe.

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