

JUXTAPOSITION

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It was after dusk.
I walked down the road that followed the sea
in the shape of a 'c.'
The tide was low and so was the moon,
its glowing, waxing crescent
a thin, sarcastic smirk.

It was set in the foreground with Hupper Island behind it,
both bodies dressed in the last faint rays of sunset:
orange at the base, layered with yellow, blue,
then deep indigo on top,
beginning the night.

The saltwater below and the blanket of colors
made the dark silhouettes of pine trees pop.
I took it all in, the beauty of
Port Clyde, the town formerly known as Herring Gut.

I tried to ignore it.
I tried to ignore the machine.
It was there the whole time.
I focused on nature as much as I could,
but I was somehow fascinated by it.

The claw
as quietly as possible,
lowering, opening,
then closing over a boulder that slipped sideways out,
opening then closing again,
in its own bright spotlight,

Just like the 25-cent claw game (or now dollar-sixty claw game)
where rarely a human catches a stuffed animal
or an emoji poop pillow.

The orange excavator crane
was perched precariously
on almost-the-edge of a cliff,
perhaps trying to stabilize the land with giant rocks
so as not to let it tumble into the sea.
Then perhaps the house behind the cliff won't
fall into the sea. The ocean, of course,
can be quite temperamental,
but not as much
as humans.

The water was serene,
a glass top
on that crisp, clear winter night. The sky
with the sliver of Earth's moon
and the color stack
stretched across the width of the horizon
enchanted me.

I wonder what it would have been like
if the machine wasn't there. Or if it was
still asleep until later, or the next day.

It surprisingly kept quiet, except for the
occasional creaks and clanks of a
giant metal beast.