

The Exile's House

Ian Parks

Precarious, on a cliff above the sea
the exile's house is improvised
from objects found while walking on the beach.

His crime, it seems, was speaking out
against a harsh, repressive regime.

Displacing dust, he moves from room to room

or gazing at the sunset, sits and waits.

The place is chained and anchored down
with ships in bottles, figureheads.

The ghosts of lovers breathe against the glass;
a trace of silver where they came and went.

An open door, a broken blind,

a rocking horse dismantled on the floor
with flying mane, distended eyes.

Under a lantern like a paper moon
at a table ringed with stains
he drinks and watches as the night dictates
words of resistance, lines of dissent.