after John Freeman

A black-headed grosbeak chitters from the makeshift shelter of our glass table. Sunlight bends and breaks against the dewy surface as the still wet lips of grass dampen our sandaled feet.

He’s been separated from his family, you tell me. His mother watches like a sniper waiting to pull the trigger on his extraction. Let’s go in,
you say, your hand
grazing my abdomen.

She won’t expose herself
to the danger we present.

Brandon McQuade was born and raised in Saint John, New Brunswick, Canada. He earned his B.A. from the University of New Brunswick Saint John and his M. Phil in Irish Writing from Trinity College Dublin. For a selection of poems from his second collection, Bodies, he was the recipient of the 2022 Neltje Blanchan Memorial Writing Award. He lives in Northern Wyoming with his wife and their children.