

# Titanic

James Cihlar

Living a decade in, a decade out of an arduous century,  
I've seen enough of suffering.

Trussed up in a lifeboat on a Hollywood set,  
forty-seven feet above

a tank of roiling water, extras in their lifeboats  
tossed about below me,

I surrender to great racking sobs over loss in our time,  
within our living memory;

how different today would be if the ship hadn't sank.  
That's why I built Marwyck, a young woman's folly,

someplace safe from the cracked-up hull of humanity.  
Brittle stalks of grass by a dry creek bed.

The sweet acidic crush of juniper berries. We can taste it,  
but we can't live there forever.

After a few years I sold my interest in the horse ranch  
to the Marxes and rented a house with Bob.

Now that he's gone he's closer than ever.  
When I clutch my Oscar, he speaks to me.

The dead ask us to forget the endings. They request  
we take a reasoned approach to remembering.

Scenes fade out. That's the nature of scenes. It means nothing.  
What matters is that somewhere in the Sierra Nevada

a herd of wild mustangs, mares and foals,  
stands on a mountaintop, hissing steam, pawing the snow.