

## Americans

12-3-09

by James Garland

You'd think, with the lights flicking on  
    At sunset, on Boar's Head, and further  
        Down along the coast, glinting, sparkling stars in the  
            Distance, Massachusetts, the long arm of Cape Ann,  
            Blue hills stretching out to sea  
Into the crimson sky of sunset, striated clouds above,  
    Vivid orange pools in the sand  
        Left by the outgoing tide,  
And breakers curling and cresting  
    A hundred yards offshore, white spume  
        Crowning the rocky jut of sandbar at the edge of the cove  
And the smell of brine so strong,  
    The laugh of the gulls moving inland for the night,  
        And the empty beach, the seaweed, the sand,  
You'd think I lived in a civilized place,  
But I don't. I live among the Americans.