

A Scene

by Gillian Sze

(a poem in response to Buffy Sainte-Marie's "Until it's time for you to go")

At some point,
all of this will stop:
the storm diminished to spots,
the wind making a final purr through our legs

but until then
watch the woman's hand searching in her purse
—in this moment, anything can be summoned—
a mint, the evening light, a forgotten dream

and above see how the sky is at a loss
only the clouds aware of their own complications
while out here the minutes tremble.
You and I tremble.

Others scatter to elude this instant
time harvesting each fearsome step

but even your hand reaching out
moves through memory

so until everything comes to a crisp stop,
let the birds wait a little longer, hungry in the trees,
let the tea steep darkly and the sky impress upon us how it will

until the woman reveals from her bag
a potted pansy, the Madonna, the blind galaxy.