

ELIZABETH WILLIS

THE AMERICANS

It goes without saying:
something pounding
while something else
flowers. Can you say
to the flower: bloom
harder. Bloom different.

Even now
in the emergency
the process hurts
even when it doesn't
break the skin.

What would it take
to give you this
finished feeling, 1492?
A future beside itself
its death concurrent
with other forms
of discovery, the lake,
the grass, the feeling
in her hand.

The national history
of a species
is not natural
enough. To repeal
this transaction
pick a side
of the equation
you can only see
one line at a time.

Let's refuse
a god who oversees
without touching
the shadows
at our backs.

Look at this
with your heart. What
has broken. What is just
about to break.