

A Letter to Dima Living at His Dacha in Pravda That I Began Two Decades Ago, But Now That Winter is Coming Again, I Resolve to Complete

I'll write to you in Russian,
but not yet. Your letter sits
on the corner of my desk

like an old woman at a bus stop
at the edge of her village,
crocheting what will become

a scarf to keep a granddaughter
warm as waits for her bus
that may never come or will

come so full she'll have to wait
for the next one. Our days arrive
and leave when we're too busy

to observe how full they are. When
will we sit in the dacha together,
knock back some vodka and tea

and feel it pulse like summer sun
through our limbs? I have sent
your poems out into the cold

in the wool parka of English.
Whether they will return, I can't
yet say. I can say my daughter

now builds her words, sound
by sound—how she says *kuboo*
for a game of hide and seek,

and *kub* for book, as if a book
were hide and seek, like vodkas
are parkas, like each day's a list

we make each day each day
we can't complete, as in
Я напишу тебе по-русски

но пока нет.