

Welcome to poetry. We are pleased to offer you a poem by Victoria's Poet Laureate, John Barton, called Faithful Street, from his new collection of poems, *Lost Family: A Memoir*.

## **FAITHFUL STREET**

*Sun-Brite Laundromat  
Cook Street Village, Victoria, 1980*

Weathered sheets take me seaward: bedding shoaled  
With shirts in my dryer's dime-spun vortex  
As I walk past Faithful, rinsed by pale sparks  
Chestnut lanterns drizzle, stairs a keyhole

Through foamy pink welters of rugosa  
And broom the cliffs sheer off the foreshore with  
Each tread down slippery, long-limbed kelp drifting  
On stones the flow rumbles, lifts sub rosa

Waves advancing in abandoned washes  
Of gritty, tingling, fast-withdrawing noise  
Stirred-up sea glass unsound and jangling, poised  
To be tamped against the sand, angles quashed

In the salt's pulse, beliefs pegged out to dry—  
Until my cycle's over, I'm tongue-tied.

—John Barton

from *Lost Family: A Memoir* by John Barton (Montreal: Signal Editions, 2020).