

## David P. Reiter

### PHONE CALL HOME

i woke up at four a.m. to call  
yesterday and tell my children  
how tired i am of exile from them  
and from myself but a blizzard  
was lashing the phone line  
so they could hardly hear me.

*The worst ever*, they crackled.  
*Same here*, i shouted back  
not to be outdone, *a cyclone*  
*up north dozens drowned*

(the only real casualties  
were cars and stray rooftops  
and a surfer who was crushed  
under an ultimate wave  
but i'd been here  
long enough to invest pride  
in our disasters)

*The skiing's the best, they said  
fading fast. You wouldn't believe  
our beaches, I countered.  
Don't catch skin cancer.  
Well, don't break a leg.*

*We miss      was the last i heard  
before the line gave way  
i miss you too i shouted  
into the bottomless dark.*

*When i set down the phone  
it was ice crystals not rain  
needling my window.*