

Robert James Berry

A CROSSING TO JURA

As the pale blue smoke of the plank ferry
builds, gulls scramble;
blades thresh quay water.

On the brief crossing out of Islay
hills with unknown names hide in low mist.
Oystercatchers constable a strand; flat
pumice stones worn as rosary beads
soak up late sun. It all shines

in the waves' cadence.
Then we shudder. Are shackled to land.

Like a basalt colossus, the mainland
looms out of cloud

across the sound's ultramarine iciness, where
mountains are nodules of bone.