Passages

by John Ranahan

Back on the mooring, we sit in the quiet

of the awning’s darkening shade.

The waves are behind us now, in the wake

of the day’s sail. No need for the cockpit drain

that spills the waters from the rain and spray.

We shift the gear to neutral and shut the engine

down. Silence, no rattling rpms to cover

Buffet singing from the weathered

speakers flanking the companionway.

The gel coat fades and ages in the evening

beneath the frayed flag, framed by the stays,

flying above the lazarettes’s filigreed runes

that trace the days of errant years.

The jammer holds the molding sheet again,

the anemometer reads its gentle knots,

and the engine gauge measures a steady zero.

We swing about in the harbor’s tides,

having come to port before the end of day.

When sailing, as in life, we need a compass

to chart the marks of our intended course

while sipping cabernet from plastic ware.