

AT THE CHERNOBYL POWER PLANT ECO-RESERVE

If ravens perch on the ferris wheel
outside of town, if owls
nest in the silos and swallows circle
the tipped watchtower, if catfish
bloat in the cooling pool and elk
graze on perennial beard grass,
if boars rake their tusks
among the roots, if black
storks claim the cloud-blighted
pines of Red Forest, if wire
succumbs to rust, if lichen,
if shingles unhinge in the snow,
if untrafficked lots cede land
to yarrow, if mirrors, if spoons
reflect the sky, if watches tick
in unopened drawers, if swollen,
if stiff-maned Przewalsi horses
foal, if wolves, if then, if then, if

