

# DANIKA STEGEMAN

## PILOT

meet me in the airplane boneyard.  
Our eyes open to see as fans

open to see. The desert's alkali  
soil and dry climate make it

ideal for preservation. In anything  
perfection is when there's no longer anything

left to take away. The airplanes  
aren't going anywhere.

Let's stay together and examine  
their wounds. Engines are odd

things—shredded spines where nerves  
come together and spill out. I don't even

know your name. Pilot. We struggle  
to understand each other. The machines

help. They annihilate time and space.  
Metal sound comes from everywhere.

It doesn't sound like an animal that monster  
sound. We see shadows in the airplane windows.

We think we see something familiar in them.  
We try to look in.

## ASTRONAUT

Blood is a chemical echo that discloses  
my anatomy cradle. It starts to say weird things

like “danger pattern,” “dinosaur concrete,”  
and “truth is a lonely pulsating universe

alone on board spaceship earth.” Our telephone  
conversation dramatically illustrates

existence. We talk on those clear plastic phones  
so we can see all the colored wires

spiraling. My phone changes into a tin can  
right in my hand. Your metal voice says

*structure...[inaudible]...inexhaustible.* I turn  
to escape only to find carelessness. You take off

for space only to find the solar system  
is a dustbin of dead bodies.