

# PATAGONIA

By Kate Clanchy

I said *perhaps Patagonia*, and pictured  
a peninsula, wide enough  
for a couple of ladderback chairs  
to wobble on at high tide. I thought

of us in breathless cold, facing  
a horizon round as a coin, looped  
in a cat's cradle strung by gulls  
from sea to sun. I planned to wait

till the waves had bored themselves  
to sleep, till the last clinging barnacles,  
growing worried in the hush, had  
paddled off in tiny coracles, till

those restless birds, your actor's hands,  
had dropped slack into your lap,  
until you'd turned, at last, to me.  
When I spoke of Patagonia, I meant

skies all empty aching blue. I meant  
years. I meant all of them with you.

*'Patagonia' from Selected Poems © Kate Clanchy,*