

THREE POEMS BY JES BATTIS

Rose Names Herself

There's a moment in *Titanic*
blurred by rain. Rose
Dewitt Bukater, final girl,
socialite, renames herself

Dawson. A dead boy's name,
knuckles frozen on the door.
She opens her eyes to the kind
census taker, says

Dawson. Your hand
sinks into mine.

I choose the iceberg.

The secret of what you said
in the Paramount theatre
now kelp song,
dented pearls.

Your jacket the shade
of false butter on our fingers
luminous in the parking lot
where the whole town
waits for us

by Chilli Bowl Lanes
shadow of the supply shop
with its ominous antlers.

Never seen two boys
holding hands under neon. This:
the first recorded disaster
in the archives.

What name would I take
if you gave me a platinum band
for an impossible wedding?

If we mortgaged a doorframe
in Vancouver
we could dog-paddle
singing

The Petshop Boys: *I love you*

you pay my rent. Would you
pay in mildewed gold
or precision heartbreak?

The theatre is gone now,
the laws changed, the water

rising

and everyone holds their breath

but the kiss comes too late:
cold, salt-flecked,
shipwrecked.