

## *Held by Water*

(Cataluña, España)

i.

In deep green, blue-green evenings of water  
cormorants fish. Their warm *negrilla patina* bodies  
glide — form in the fabric of sea flexible mollusk nests  
flecked by healing turquoise.

i watch the black *S* curve of each neck  
the slipper of each head cast

silhouettes of  
ink-drenched brush tips  
dipping  
and lifting —  
in  
aquarelles.

Waves of æolian half-moons float  
by the thousands; a spangled migration of magnesium  
blue to the pencil line of horizon.

The boy, Juan, and his father swim  
easily near an island rock—

my cousin,  
Sylvanna, treads water

above  
a creviced  
and observant  
*pulpo*.

ii.

A goggled swimmer slips  
into nearby boulder shadows, lowers her gaze

to a shoal of striped green minnow  
on a current mission  
or school of bream, translucence of lemon pulp  
nibbling two-fathoms-down  
algae.

Schools of cerulean-striped wrasses —  
the size of my ring finger — soar

in lattice formation — don't flee —  
don't seem to mind —  
a pale flipper-swimmer cooling off  
among them.

iii.

For three weeks air is hot as a mammal's  
internal organs. Cobalt salt water offers infusions of  
elemental forces  
as light gives sea late-in-the-day iridescence.

*Gorgonia* sway below, tiny trees of thalo green and gold  
each side-branch, the diminutive thumb of  
an ancient child's hand signaling ,  
perception.

On the surface of a submerged stone — a single starfish splays.  
It is red — redder even than Mars  
passing close  
to home — and one tentacle is gently bent.

i have come to these cliffs, though not exactly this  
water for twenty-two summers.  
i am home

among the families



Our shared *signal receiver* is love and the sky.

vi.

i cherish an earth exuberant with life, surrounded  
by stars and planets, their energies  
buffeting existence —

and i am aware my geocentric focus may be viewed  
as nostalgia.

vii.

When a grey flurry torpedoed  
into an underwater  
swimmer's view — the shock of its *half-leap-up / curled-plunge-down* is an  
up-  
close  
mix

of onyx — *brush* of titanium — one painting  
streaking alchemy into  
another — the trajectory of a large bird on the hunt  
submerged at a downward

40°  
angle .

It's like a wingless person flying  
or a baby rabbit emerging from an egg —

an eruption from a sleeping creature's dream into the down-  
filled pillow of another's.

viii.

the transition from one  
dimension to another is ambiguous — mythic — *a disarrangement*  
of formal elements such as color, depth, & scale —  
reaching for an infinite

ix.

Fish scatter. . . .

A startled swimmer retracts, climbs jangled and dripping from the water.

Juanito is better this year, his mother says.

x.

The gaze of nature pulls us into  
an awareness of alliances the influx of external energy  
and internal matter communicating  
*the sensation of waves.*

Even as those i love —  
*animal, mineral*  
fall ill or die or disappear  
interactions occur  
we are struck by sudden breakages — and  
*following fish becomes a meditation.*  
we will die — the earth someday as well.

xi.

As strings hum into place

*among divergent forms*

a feathered creature behaves like a fish  
and a boy's relationship  
to the world is improved.

The blaze of nature pulls us in-  
to *silver water starry earth*

as polar ice melts  
*no chemical is entirely isolated ;*  
though people are divided and neighbors  
hang opposing flags  
*among divergent forms*  
from plaza windows

*interactions occur —*

Children rise  
and cormorants begin to reappear  
as eco-forces enter coastal laws  
(nature pulls us into  
*silver water starry earth*).

i experience loss  
yet this day i am grateful feel joy  
held among fish among odd birds  
within family  
within

xii.

On the ruced ruins of a harbor  
made beautiful by human failure  
wind erection and aggressive swell of first-quarter-of-the-century winters  
a family of still-young uncles  
and middle-aged mothers and cousins form

a supple geometry of umbers

in verticals & diagonals of pine and sienna  
slipping into  
and out of  
evening  
water.