

## **HIGH PRESSURE**

I think I live deep in the ocean  
Powerless to be a sunflower daily facing dawn  
Whatever I plant down here comes to nothing  
Are the water's white teeth barred against me?

The quick cold currents want to leave me to their torment  
The darkness is like darkness lodged in an inkbottle  
Without the strength to climb onto paper, to leap into the truth

If I got any prouder, I'd be the stingray floating its vain cloud  
The ocean, too, has gotten polluted—everywhere, these gorgeous, toxic blooms  
I scrub and scrub but my body still swarms with those parasites, 'right' and 'wrong'

Maybe all I can do is sing along with the roe  
Singing along with the water bubbles  
If I go with the tide, I must be making progress!

## TEA LEAVES

As they steep, they become the water's eyebrows  
Become its slim waist, its thighs and fingers  
They're mute as mimes  
Mimicking my sleeping body

As they steep, they become spring's submarine  
Never again will smog defeat them  
Here on the other side of the cup, I size up these hermits  
I wonder—do they worry? Fear?

Hot water is tea's wedding veil  
To crown tea's marriage to me  
Sometimes the water cries  
*As if to say look how skinny the bride is*  
*And still she offers you her last scrap of warmth*

I pour and repour boiling water  
Until all flavor's seeped from the tea leaves  
Their glum look says  
*I'm old—my body's swollen—*  
*Darling, don't hesitate*  
*Go marry some skinny new tea*

## THE OLD MAILBOX

The old mailbox no one uses  
Lives under the rain's tent. All day  
It swallows pollution  
Exhales an even richer nothingness

Its shadow orbits it  
Like a repentant son

It's old but it doesn't wear glasses  
And wind can't knock it down  
It knows silence has a center  
Of gravity no one can topple

It sees proud lightning  
Is a crack in the horizon  
It understands thunder  
Is a lost god shouting

At the streets' invitations, it opens its mouth—  
Since it doesn't accept and doesn't refuse them  
It's neither cursing nor singing