

My Brother From the Sea

Emily Lupita Plum

Ocean waves rise up and crash as
these bare knees stretch
and hang long over Campeche
towards currents rushing in from Cuba,
rushing in from village to village this tide
has come fast and deep, slipping me
up and into its swirling infinity
like the stillness at day's end,
like the last part of my long
breath

now

I think of us as small children
back home on the farm
near Thousand Acres,
near the sheriff's
fishing pond squatting in mud holes
(worms and their slime)
to swim and wrestle
and flop, slapping on the surface
like adolescent frogs,
like the tongue of a mama horse,
like the tapping of a tin roof
against the rain.

Dad sawing mushrooms from trees,
Mama in the garden, her green watering can
Swaying back and forth,
swaying
back and forth.

Potatoes simmering on the wood stove

sleeping bag races
tent people
mud monsters
snowy tunnels

sucking leeches
arrowheads
newborn birds

- they call to me looking out
over the sea over the top
of this castle
this abandoned room with a view,
with walls and cannons to protect
the great state of Campeche from pirates,
from the fierce winds, from the
giant tumbling waves.

They call to me here on this wall, my legs
stretching north, kicking up the spit and salt,
reaching towards the emptiness left behind
as this endless universe in blue
reminds me that I am growing old
far from you and your ways of laughter,
far
from our time in the Iowa sunrise
light.

Yet as the early breeze sings,
as she swings up from under me and lifts
these legs, puts them back out beneath me,
as she curls up my heart and sends it out
on this last wave leaving towards morning,
she caresses these salty memories.

And I

I drift away again
across the sea to Mani
or blue and yellow Progresso.