
To Rainbow

I remembered you
When a crow sailed screaming
Up into the high morning
Sky: Blue air, blue water
And green, white foaming and
Green streaming along your young flanks.

Rainbow, I thought, the Dolphin playing through the sky.

You had a year before the nets,
And the tank.
The sea hisses, alive, and light flies
Through it forever.

In the tank light is
A crazy ricochet. You signal
Through dead black water, and the sound
Shrieks, bounces and shrieks, and dies.
You are alone.

In the dead aquarium air,
The human feet pass, mouths open and close,
Eyes peer.
What do they see, these eyes, remote and glittering?
The air is dim and thin above the tank.
What do they want, the passing feet,
Eyes, mouths?

You cannot tell them about the life
You chased and found
And chased again along those
Silver paths of water.

They don't understand that you're a child.
They don't see the fatal heart wound made
By the enclosing nets, that cut you away
From your mother—

From the love that flows in one great ocean heartbeat,
One being, flowing out of her and into you—
Do they even imagine it?—Within/without
Made no difference there.

Between you and her, and others, kin,
Singing:
Notes bent and played along miles and miles
In the dark light of night,
Into the gleam of morning,
Into leaps of sunlit blue-white air.

Above the tank, the air is thin.
Human hands twist hate and love into
Nets and ropes of envy.
Is that what sparks their eyes?
Do they wonder how to love like that?

When the nets strangled you away from
Your mother and your kin—and your pain screamed
And ran along the waves
And down and through the cold running deep,
When feet, and eyes, and mouths had their victory,
Did they know then?

Now they only trudge past.
Eyes look down and down, thinking
"Water" and "sea" and "ocean,"
Thoughts too deep, too full of love, too free,
And so the hands twist, and the eyes narrow,
And water and ocean become fear,
And they envy you, finally,
Your endless, beautiful, and perfect
Pain of loss.

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