

Old Wives Tales

Grandmother said
old wives tales knit
the unseen into the seen,

the awe into the ordinary,
a reason into the question –

the mystery of why
it all holds together.

When winds gargle in the forest,
the child hears the trees snore.

A dog pedals hardest to freedom
in his sleep.

Eternity is safe inside
the curves of a conch shell,
smooth and shiny.

If she sits alone in a silent field
a child will hear the stars flash.

A drunken man snores
in gulps.

Grandmother said
a child is born in the curve
of a crashing wave,

and carries with him forever
the silence,
and the roar.

A Child By The Sea

When I was young,
every summer held a journey to the sea
how long we were there, I don't remember,
but it seemed like the whole season –

summer, then, was a long blue sky that spanned
from the last days of spring rain
to the first russet leaves,

like a fantastic bridge, you couldn't see the end –

but I'm probably mistaken,
I don't recall a sense of time.

But Oh! To be that child again!

To live inside
the shifts of air,
to be of the water
and breathe crackled breaths
with the crabs,

To watch my imprint
appear,
then wash away,
edges softened and softened,
and gently, gone.

To swim up to a cormorant –
and see a silver fluke in his beak,

To rest my shoulders on the sand
and cover my face with the sky,

clouds and seagulls racing,

To know the heart of a poet
but not his words –
to pinch a grain of sand
and see all the ocean's reflections.

Lapping Waves, Lapping

The sea makes me dream
of a rhythm unchanging,

A flower closing
and opening again,
rich and robust,
new and renewed –
yet so very ancient.

The sea carries dreams
of flight unmeasured –
seagulls are pinpoints,

a lifetime fills a moment
and the moment overflows life –

the sea carries, and releases,
and carries,
and releases.

It tells me to breathe – breathe deep –
breathe in the clouds
and the sun,
and the rain,
and the lapping waves, lapping.

The sea makes me wonder
which wave carries dreams
of those
who have gone before,

and which wave
will carry mine.

Dream The Sea

I.

After masts of ships
melt into the sky

After all the outlines fade

After pitch of darkness
rolls in, to cover the sea

A low moon rises
in sweet and salty air

It bumps up,
a sliver first,
then a swell,
sides rounding,
engorged,

bulging,
and bulging,
bounded by
black, and black:

a yellow lantern sitting
on top of the sea –

and when it's light spills
in slices and silvers,
here and there,

little pieces
of dreams
dance a pathway,
walking across the water.

II.

I dream the sea,
weeping

a wailing lament
a starless night,

a sob, lost in a deep trough
between the waves –

Regret
and regret.

I dream the sea
racing,

a wave
exploding,

Choices
and choices.

A white moth
crackles
on the bare porch light.

III.

He dreams of an *Endeavor*,
rounding Cape Horn, beached
on the mainland –

the story, is in the eyepiece,
or in it's aim –

scenes and spectacles
from a basket atop mainmast,
or mizzen,

vision stretched out as far as the crow flies:

a horizon that is pulled taffy,
blue
and stringy,

imaginings that are far away,
and then close,
wispy,

stencils
in a mist,

drawn by fragile pens,

dreams collected
in an eyeglass.

Horizon

There is a space we inhabit,
a space between

the rim of the sky
and the crest of the ocean,

a space of vanishing points
and miraculous arrivals

a space that seizes
the imagination,
and denies its escape –

a holding cell
for the soul.