

WHALE SONG

The wind has fallen asleep with the Sun
And the Moon has found another window
For the night. The sea beneath us breathes
In a gentle rhythm, and we lay becalmed
Honored guests in this solemn congress of stars
That meets around us to choose the colors of the sky.

Three times a minute, or so, a meteor
Flashes like a blue sword from Perseus.
In the black water below new stars are born
With a blue-green flash of phosphorus.

An island, two miles to the north of us,
Shadows us carefully, and now and then
Captures a star with its dark arms.
Incense of flowers hangs like forgiveness in the air.

And in the deep hours, when the tired eyes
Of the small towns have fallen dim
And the flames of the stars' candles stand up
Like clear angels, then we hear a song
Rise around us from the unreachable canyons
Of water over which we drift.

It is the song of souls that have been inlaid
With uncountable centuries of innocence
It is the clean song of those who will not
Remember the uncountable wrongs we have done them.

We sit humbly in the last pew of this chapel
And let the wild beauty of these psalms
Splinter our significance. These simple friars
Whose friends are the stars and
Whose friends are the white albatrosses
Have remembered to pray for us tonight.