

BRINE BITCH OFF THE BAHAMAS,
LOVE LETTERS IN JON'S LOG

Day 5-- Silver Navidad Banks--
sighted Megaptera-- suborder Mysticeti--
one showed us a close-up expanse
of facelessness, an eye mounted in it.

Off watch at 12 a.m.
If I haul in the cerebral anchor,
the weightless part of me drifts
into the ocean's nucleus. At sleep's edge
you promise to follow me to the dark
of my carapace, flowing your obsidian hair,
winding your shades whispers perfumes
through my deep chambers. Together
we're caught in the pull of the black hole
waiting in the secret center of all things.

My bed is grandmother-rocking-me water. I am
child old man lover essence of sealife.
You lean over me, jade pendant swinging
from between your breasts, waiting to anoint
my sleep with moonwash if I let its tide rise
and take me. He puts himself at risk
who comes to relieve me of this watch.

If there are whales beyond the bow,
they're oneiric as I am, forgetting to breathe,
not wanting to disturb the tender surface tension
of midnight-stained moire, the ship's shadow,
the silent engine.

Caught in the bias of this latitude
I long to dive deep and alone, to generate
a cephalopod arm a barbel a snail foot sliding
me among nocturnal prowlers. There are things
down there shining codes and coordinates
to their kind I could read tonight.

I've happened in the wrong century.
I want back the beauty unsoiled undissected,
not hanging by claws from margins of abstraction
or extinction. I want back the metaphors. Full
reflections, not disjointed hyperbole
of what was whole.

You haven't abandoned beauty, my landlocked love,
you are more of the sea than you know. Come with me
tomorrow on my longest dive, stowaway in my tanks,
be what I inhale. Down there
is where you got your eyes.