

No further  
By Rebecca N. McKinnon

I drew a line  
in the sand  
and said  
Come up to this  
No further

Your toes crossed  
it  
My toes crossed  
it  
And your mouth  
whispered  
onto mine  
Come up to this  
No further

A new line  
I lay down  
where I know  
the tide  
will come  
to erase it  
My voice catches  
Come up to this  
No further

I betray myself  
and make myself  
look lacking logic  
Yet I am ever so logical  
as the water covers  
our ankles  
You hold my hand  
and the sky turns  
red with lightning  
It warns  
Come up to this  
No further

The Atlantic Ocean asserts  
its boundaries  
In summer  
the sunscreen

and sweat  
stings our eyes  
Would it hurt more  
to enter?

The sun beats  
us our thoughts  
beat us the  
offshore wind  
beats us our  
memories beat  
us

Well  
Maybe  
if we just enter  
Up to this  
No further

The water clouds  
our movements  
toward and around  
each other  
The water lessens  
our gravity away  
from each other  
A forearm  
A hip bone  
A spine  
In our distraction  
with and of  
each other  
the ocean steals  
something  
from each of us  
There is so much  
of the sea  
left  
but I lose  
my footing  
Come,  
I beg,  
drowning,

Up to this?  
you ask from

your safe threshold,  
no longer seeing  
the benefit

I swim in your  
direction  
but the tide I once  
tricked pulls  
me holds me  
back  
You shake your head

No further