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