

Ann Wood Fuller



Wrecks

... the bottom of the sea is cruel — HART CRANE

Grand Cayman shimmered on the ironshore,
And from the bougainvillea-slatted terrace
Of the pink hotel, I opened
The shutters onto the beach, spilling
Like powdered sugar into the map-water blue Caribbean.
We flew in to close the account,
Divide the property; as if apart, the past
Would be absolute. We drove by George Town's
Harbor where pigs still groaned
On the marl; beyond the houses painted
Lemon-yellow, chlorine-green. In broom-swept yards,
The stink of frangipani and fried turtle filled the air,
And parrots roosted on porch-sofas overlooking
Family graves. In the distance we heard
The nickle bells of sheep grazing between the almond trees.
I remembered that first sunset, we stopped
At East End's Gun Bay. The brochure opened to, "Wreck
On the Ten Sail, a must dive!" On a bed of shells, white
As cigarette papers, we left our clothes; the water, filled
With phosphorus, dripped gold from your lips.
We swam towards twin tankers, spined with rust, jackknifed
On the reef, hulls ruptured like rotten fruit. Marine
Monuments of some foreign government, one of
Captain's fog of rum.
Ship and sea, like a marriage of faithfulness,
Of which each must balance.
Somewhere below, neat piles of ballast
Stones, anchors.

