

IN DEFENSE OF MY POETRY

How can I make him understand?
I'm a child of reef and kelp,
a water sign. My muse is La Mer
who comes unbidden, rolling
from unknown depths to regale
my shores. Sometimes I find
the metaphorical nacre she left
behind for me to make a poem.

I claim scant artistry. Only a way
of seeing. Not even knowing when
or where it will happen. Or how.
The rest is work. Like sifting sand
and washing shells.

He read my last poem and frowned.
"You never write about anything
but the sea or ships," he said.
"Don't mountains appeal to you?
And what about love?"

I've been remiss, it's true.
I mulled over mountains once--
listing eastward, keels immersed
in rippling green far below.
Some had white-capped crests
like mighty waves of geologic time.

I studied a man once, and still--
tall and sure as a mainmast,
eyes blue-deep as summer undertow,
caresses soft as low tide surf.

His kiss is a freshening promise
of trade winds speeding us home.
And our love is all the anchorage
this dreamer needs of any port.

I will write him a proper wifely idyl
in rhyming ictus, a lighthouse
to shine through his coastal squalls.

It will begin as a sonnet.
It will become a sonata.