

CIRCLES AND CIRCLES OF SOUND

I descend the scale where my lamp found warm colors
in blue cold. A minor key aria, an undercurrent area
of rhythm pounds with mine. Sounds are older here,
rhymes louder, rumbling in mounds of wrinkled polyps,
millennial remnants once bent on feeding, breeding,
still building foundations echoing the timpani of now.

The auditorium is filled, also the audience. Rapt,
ocean-wrapped, each passage astounds. The sounds
of being, atavistic verbs reverberate dark within
while darting low and light around me, thrumming
my Pisces genes. Water amplifies this allness,
resonates through shells, in shoals, on mossy floors
where swaying floral-feathered animals abound. Imagine
Debussy's La Mer had he known such pageantry below.

Undulating branches of elkhorn coral staffs
are wound with blisters of silver as my bubbling wake
of whole notes plays in nets of algae. Some escape
the tune to join an endless monotone of green.

Ashore I'll synthesize these shades and shapes
of music: A frowning moray snapping its hunger
on finny iridescence. A carapace browned
with parasitic plush passing through the theme.
Parrot fish gnawing the reef, bright mills grinding
coral into miles of sand. B-flat flounders hollow out
the bottom range, the gamut of unseen appetites.
Downed by day, they lie in wait to hound the night.
And as it nears, the timbre grows fuller, rounder,
like the coursing salt inside me.

I must return to higher ground, respond to other tempos
as my obbligato is drowned in rising tidal volume.
Tomorrow, uncrowned, no fanfare from Triton's trumpet,
my frail presence will re-enter this royal suite, hear
this command performance, and hum close harmony again
--an unknown unrenowned duet with sea's primeval sounds.