

I watch our boat plow ripe Bahama blue,
collecting dolphin dorsals in our froth-skids.
Parenthesizing us, they arch on cue--
rollercoasting creatures just like kids
in circus midways. Unimpressed with grids
and charts, they trail confetti-glitter high,
and volley fragment diamonds in my eye.

In Caribbean moonwash overlying
sunken banks and reefs, we hear them clicking,
nattering and whistling, gamely trying
to fill our tape-- mimic Marconis tricking
our ears to their number, three or four sticking
together, raising such a scrambled din.
Perhaps like us, they feel we're somehow kin.

The salty core of my aquatic dream:
To slither like a seal through liquid warm,
awaking dozing redfins. Their red stream
will lead the way and fling a fiery storm
of living arrows, cross the scooping form
of undulating outriders, our pair--
Pagliacci faces grinning us a dare.

And now the dream is real and we are here;
increasing time each day the sea is home.
The flanking porpoise escort pushes near,
suspecting us for wetbacks, monochrome
against a beige and turquoise catacomb,
who crossed their borders with our rigged passports
and foreign marques to⁷⁹⁵ dabble in their sports.

And as our flippered presence weaves its part,
the framed montage is sudden silver-slashed
with black-masked angels practicing their dart
and pivot, coded greetings sequin-flashed.
Poor David can't perceive the treasures cached
around us in the ceaseless rocking swells.
He suffers bends outside his scholar's cells.

He has no feel for magic strewn between
prolonged depth rapture (my kind lingers
on for days) and staid degrees in marine
biology. The beauty slips his fingers
like eels eluding grasp. His spinal tinglers
misfire. I want his joy to equal mine,
to fill him with the ocean's pulse and shine.

Oh, David, don't resist that deeper tug
of underwater wonders few have seen--
the manta like a genie's flying rug,
anemones against a muraled screen.
He names and sorts, ignoring damascene
chiaroscuro, shaded hue and light,
the songs in minor keys that I must write.

Our bubbling wake is coded melody;
each globule rises to a treble staff
of long-reached elkhorn branching like a tree.
Gray-green conveys whole notes, a sonic graph
for ears attuned to each breath's epitaph.
High coral altars bless the tithes of sun