

Degna Stone - England

Vörður

You think of harbours as peaceful places
though every single one you've seen
has been industrious, noisy, machinery
clanging, gulls shouting, people, people,
people everywhere. The only peace
is found in mountains echoing clouds.

The buildings are instruments the wind plays.
Pentatonic scales chime, dissonant
harmonics ring and fill your head,
carve a path through your brain
destroying its way markers
so that you can't find your way back.

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We leave the harbour, but keep the coastline in view.
If we lose sight of it we believe the sea will vanish,
we need the water's green glow to keep us in its sights too.

The city shifts.

We find ourselves
at the ghost of the old shoreline.

You tell me tales of houses that wander through town,
statues that walk from overshadowed, overlooked corners
to find a home where the swans protect us from water horses.

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The wind grows fierce at Reykjanes.
We don't know where to begin so we wind
our way across the ash-black landscape.
The heather looks like embers,
sand grits between our toes.

We topple the way markers as we walk.
We aren't interested in finding our way back.
There is no point in going back.
We are not going home.

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You sit away from the edge of the cliff in the lea of a way marker.
I stand with my back to the sea watching you, willing the wind
to take the feet from beneath me and hurl me into the air.
I imagine myself floating down like Jesus descending from heaven,
submerging past the monochromatic birds littering the swell,
freeing myself of the bond that ties me to the landscape.

But the wind dies down and here I still am,
still watching you sit in the lea of the way marker.

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Tell me stories of how the water baptised you,
took away your sense of self.
Tell me how it will heal you, or kill you.

The ocean's will to let you escape with your life
depends on the moods of its tides.

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You think you see the woman who saved you,
so you follow her to the edge of the sea,
expect to find her waiting there with answers.

The sea calls us over, asks us to take a leap
to find the people we lost, the people we left behind
when we gave ourselves to each other.

What happens when the sea turns against you
when it tires of the burden of you on its surface.

God's name won't leave your lips,
sticks in your throat and drowns the good in you.

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You took your love at face value. Failed to see
the horror that was visible from behind. Never knew
the difference between falling and falling in love.

We meet ourselves coming back from the edge,
of our senses. Feel the emptiness more than ever.

I can't be held responsible for your heart
when I am no longer responsible for my own.