

## **Fall as a Sequence of Seas**

Seasons come like a fever or rash  
you think, unfolding cashmere scarves,  
lining up boots and gloves with rabbit fur cuffs.

That's not a chorus of wind in maples  
but a sequence of seas assembling  
for fall, finding their collective  
wrecked defective mouth, oil smeared,  
kelp-bloated, just open your mouth.

They remove lipstick, kneel, and recite  
seas as if a litany of the incontrovertibly blessed----  
Adriatic, Ionian and Tyrrhenian, Timor, Flores, Andaman.

You wouldn't dare put such shells  
to your ear. You would become deaf.  
Lice lay eggs in sacks in your hair.  
Then moon blinds you.

Some women become accidental vagrants.  
They were hanging sheets in sun when some  
celestial aberration struck them,  
a stray pebble tossed skimmed a pond  
on an obscure still unnamed world.  
Just a migraine, they shrug, but don't return.

The forest is a warehouse of cellos  
stained auburn like your mother's hair.  
Consider the graceful precision of a sudden  
death at sea, perhaps, as your daughter practices  
making her lips a well and kissing her wrist  
in hallways painted aubergine and reeking of opium.

Arson is a form of love.  
It's a shaping tool like a kitchen knife  
or fountain pen. The forest like a heart  
is outlined in neon and flame.  
Not an organ but a peninsula with harbors,  
seawalls, ferries, history and bells,  
plazas with monuments and bronze statues,  
volcanoes and poppies, depots for trains.

These trees are the texture of hypnosis  
and somnambulism, strange and abrasive

like walking in your sleep and drowning.  
Wait. I'm lighting a cigarette. Smoking improves  
my vision, my ability to read minds and tea leaves,  
essential job skills. That's technique.  
I was born with clairvoyance, not eyes but telescopes.  
I've had unusual surgeries to not correct.

Beyond, it's still an autumn of ambulances  
and cumulative incremental betrayals.

Divorce would be the least of it.