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Hypernatremia

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Hypernatremia

Ebb and flow,
her body arching
and her hair—the white
caps that spray you in whips
again. Taste her salt. Her feet
entwine yours and
the blankets, the sand.
The gulls, an echo of her cries,
sprawled and swerving. They
are an audience to these
tides that sweep as she has. And
her air, pungent, dynamic, leaving
you like menthol now, numbed
and shivering.

Still, the taste in your mouth.

And here is the danger, for the waves recede and the pools
are drying, this bed rough and granulated like so
many others. Only the salty foam that
you came here to taste lingers—her
last utterance to you. That final
flavor mingles with
your own. And though
the waves will return,
she is not with them.

You can see her in full technicolor,
flickering on a screen as you slow the film to singular
frames. Suspend the moment,
but how useful? A trigger for memory—
Nothing more.

So you drink the salty waves. You
will find her this way or another.

Brad Tanguay