

AMOROSO

the sea is a man | murmuring it gently
You are never alone | he calls me under
a lowering sky invites me | slyly! to
slip & slide | beneath his confetti of
ticker-tape foam | planets line | Up!
the axis lunges & Alaska falls right into
China | I crashed into love one day
like that & woke up a woman | alone |
the mountain is | male: he roars like
an iceberg on fire in the rain | shouting
out to me over his pain *Help me! Into
your heart!* | I melted myself one night
that way but | froze up quick smart
again when I saw | millions! charging
like moths love's flame | float by dead
the next morning | look | even the
poem is | masculine now: mouthing out
metaphors one by one | tongue in my
ear | hand on my thigh! arms stretch
in muscular lines | I am not inclined ||

ARIA #3

she packs up her laptop picks up her dog
takes her last steps through their house

she snaps photographs with her eyes: here
is the table there is the chair and do you

remember and I can still hear and how did
it happen that love got away? | nasturtiums

parsley and mint line the path oregano and
sage by the back porch stairs | she planted

them there – tucked them into their beds –
fed and watered and watched them until |

she will grieve them each each day | o!
Mother I have lost all my faith in good

things | and Father I fear I will never be
fearless again | the truck stops outside and

she opens the door and then she goes under
under the water and now I can't breathe can

not find the sun all my futures collapsing
a decade of air turning tricks in my land-

locked lung | (I unpack laptop / put down
dog / take first steps through new home) ||

APPASSIONATO

he thundered out! of a wild July | sweet
froth flicking from his steed's hot flesh
his hollering thrown like | punches to the
sky his mouth a noose-formed Munch!
I was a child when he first arrived | I
suppose you thought if he came at all
he would sneak up | stealthily! whisper
seductively! enshroud me | softly! in his
blanket of black but | No! it was always
violent & nights were worst with him
treading underground the possibility of
dream | dragging me heel-wise behind
his lead | promising providence but
giving me grief every second of every
day ||: *you / are / mine / yes / you / are /
mine* :|| he still visits me now | the same
old act | rearing above me practising
his art | pretending to | save! while
pulling me apart & the hooves those
hooves | hammering all over my heart ||

ARIA #7

forever forever and forever | I tongue the sounds
around my mouth as though saying were believing |

it was an enormous day | the old Lear sea intoned
in peaks its certainty of change | while you and I

placed arrhythmic repeats of all our faith in love
||: *forever* :|| today the ocean true to form bears

little resemblance to the one we watched at sleep
in corridors of blue | today the sea is brainwashed

brazen its disjointed waves attempting perfection
before wrecking themselves on the shore | *but it*

was an enormous day | beautiful things | five
senses alive a hope in the heart no iceberg attack

no riverbed cracked | our saline secret preserved
intact | we conversed in dialects never conversed

in before | we discovered the longing coast | we
lay on the world and invited the warmth from deep

below sand to enter the whole of our souls | we
mouthed *forever* and knew that we would always

all ways be complete (ah! better delete that final
bit: delete | delete | delete | delete | delete) :||

ARIA #8

the night breeze was beginning to stir |
it was cooling the burning inside my mind

I was writing more quickly | the pages
were turning | the darkness was creeping

between the good trees | I was crying I
love you | transcribing it wildly | I was

trying to keep the words in one place |
they were killing the silence | the pages

were burning | the words were forcing
themselves from my pen | I was howling

them loudly | I was scribbling them out
the darkness was starting to hurl through

my head | it was filling the pages | the
good trees were leaning | the words were

spilling all over my face | I was writing
them down I was throwing them up | they

were waltzing like soldiers into a war |
waving at me before moving on | is this

the way the long night ascends | o is this
how it ends am I dead yet | is it morning ||

RELIGIOSO

Sunday morning & here am I down
on my knees in the dirt again | sun in a
stranglehold rain in a | fist! a tonnage
of sky at my back as I work my hands
deep into the earth | this is my church
larger than Chartres more wild! than
Westminster | vines providing their
delicate tracery | eucalypts ribbing! the
vault with majestic Grace | all through
the morning I bend & stand | stand &
bend | moving slowly around my beds
looking up now | & then for the storm
which soon enough will descend | yes
it is a quiet religion that delivers my
passion these days | it is the hope of a
seed which grants me | hope! & the joy
of a seedling which gives | joy! back to
me | a difficult past almost far behind
I prepare myself for prayer | walking
forth in gumboots & gloves | dressed
in Sunday Best | I breathe in the air
of my cathedral | get down to confess ||

ARIA #9

we begin with water as all things do the anonymous
waves our cradle | beneath our feet fish back and

forth in love | o swift and perfect symmetry! | shape-
shifting endlessly they hum strict geometries to buoy

our heavy hearts up | we have come from the city
in a slow-motion crawl from ourselves | there is much

we have yet to learn | treading the water we face
each other each other's dead weight forcing our minds

to combine | this dunking is barely a swim! | yet we
paddle regardless aware somewhere of a beginning

requiring an end | another day sees us plough laps at
a pool | rinse later in chorus the detritus of chlorine

from our skins | we take many baths walk in the rain
often we are wet ||: and then one night you bring the

aquarium home :|| we sit and sit and stare at the glass
and its thirteen suspended inhabitants | and as hours

pass we begin to see | that anything at all may be
drowning inside and we may end up back at sea ||: *we*

*shall drink to those days which will never come and
dive blind as strangers | straight back onto the sand :||*

ARTICOLATO

the word is | a catechism of doubts | is
structured in air | thinks in Helvetica
font | it is empty as palm | full as closed
fist the word | is hard to resist | it calls
to me in Bold ||: Love! No Love! :|| rolls
over the tundra like men lumbering out
from the local mine rolls over my tongue
like a man | the word has | escaped
from my throat & all day | I am chasing
it down | mile / mile / town / town | My
Word that word is getting around | the
word is | Out! | but I don't know what
its fate is | it climbs onto the roof of my
mouth & jumps | Off! | untranslated ||

CHORUS # I

ll: our resolve had leapt
ship | our mind walked

the plank | our heart
had begun to list | our

coastal navigation had
come under mutiny and

yes! there were *words*
below deck :ll but now

how we have learned to
plough through waves

of muscle and memory |
to thump out triumphant

the other side | all those
parts that were flawed

and frozen are thawing |
the whole boat has got

itself turned right way
round! ll: nothing killed

nobody drowned | *and*
everything finally still :ll

CHORUS #2

there was no shelter for our illegal
heart no home for our temporary

soul | we were nothings nobodies
non-existent parts in the whole |

you rounded us up you herded us
down to where the water was rising

||: *you made us walk the mile* :||
and filmed with your phones the

flow of our tears and that fast and
fearsome flood | you know salt

is salt when the deed is done and
it all comes out in the wash | (that

this rivulet/river tastes just like the
sea and may be our ticket home) |

hey! we hear your words | obey
your bidding as we hide new hope

in our hem | then We-Who-Have
No-Love we get down on our knees

you tell us that this is The End and
you have a name for us ||: Them :||

CHORUS #4

ll: come hell or high water we will
survive | we have shown our self

to our self :ll we have prayed to
the *and* and the *ampersand* | have

walked over water and swum over
land just to make sure we're alive |

we have held many things and let
them depart | we have studied and

mapped the 'ice-particles' trapped
in our beautiful nacreous heart |

we have been down deeper than the
lowest can go | have paraded us

naked | and donned like Joseph the
coat of the dangerous rainbow | we

have sat in the pit been despised for
our dreams | we have had our own

brethren against us | have watched
our sheaf rise while yours lay down

and | despite the bright cloud | we
have seen the sun moon stars bow ll

CHORUS #6

we went to hell on an expedition
and brought back the ashes for

analysis | we went to hell after
reading an ad that insisted you

simply can't miss this | we went
to hell on a shopping spree and

bought a stash of great stuff | we
went to hell on a pilgrimage to

bury the dead word us | we went
to hell for a heavenly break and

had us a helluva time | we went
for god's sake! to the hottest hot-

spot where the sun can do naught
but shine | we went to hell and

liked it so much we thought we
just might not return | our ticket

had burned in the brimstone any-
way | but hey! this was hell!

things could have been worse! |
and none of us were concerned ||

CHORUS #8

ll: it really was! Hell | we put on
a brave face | none of us could

stay in that place :ll fat smoke
smacked us over the mouth and

flames flared from our heart | it
was difficult to breathe and we

choked on words like 'cacophony'
and 'love' | no rain ever fell in

Hell | green was merely a dream |
our house burned brightly day and

night | while white ash stuck our
eyes fast shut in the thuggish fog-

filled light | we held our palms
towards the sky we wept beneath

His curse | but He kept on at it
Thirst! Thirst! until He knew we

heard | eventually we laid our
self like Isaac on the pyre | and

waited there | below the world |
yea! even our dog was on fire ll

CHORUS #9

ll: from the crown of the mountain
we hear the sea yell | *Dive! so*

that you may live! :ll but we are
far from anything watery and still

quite a way from our self | the
black within remains our chorus

and we remain its song | while
the pyrocumulus sky contracts we

are yet a long mile from what some
one else might call 'home' | and

thus we cleave to our rock in the
cloud and endure the good ocean's

moaning | it wants us back where
we belong and continues its drone

drone drone | as fingers of dawn
draw the fog from our eyes we can

glimpse its green heart beating and
lo! our feet start slowly to move |

slightly downhill | step by step |
towards the willing coast's love ll

CHORUS #15

we went to the village
doctor | to heal our

civilised heart | there
were billions of us in

millions of queues but
the good doctor worked

very fast | she raised
her hand! as though we

were one | and laid it
upon our brow | she

closed our eyes and in
thousands of tongues

sung out the sole word
Now | we gazed in to

our one open self and
repeating aloud that

same holy sound | we
made our crooked way

from B to A right into
the heart | of the sun ||

FINALE

||: she gathers the choir of voices voices
ringing around in her head | *and makes*
them into one :|| she takes the mirror
down from the wall | smooths her soul

and straightens her heart | prepares her
self for the fabulous final song | for this
she needs to be high above ground | way
away from the world and its sounds yet

close enough to be heard when she sings
it out | she climbs the rungs towards the
sky as if it were a stage | selects a stratus
undulatus cloud | and stands to face the

crowd | she opens her throat expands her
lungs for the historic never-again time |
delivers her song *silenzio* | down the dark
years | all the way to the very first line ||

