

Bathers

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I.
She drifts directionless;
is unafraid, perhaps because
she doesn't understand yet,
hasn't tried to find her way back home.

The surface has no depth to it;
she floats, but not on anything —
not on her back, not on the
turquoise of an island's sea.
She's silent. She's moving.
Is it movement when there's no
direction home? when there's no
direction anywhere?

There are no stars above her
or below her, and no light or dark
(she doesn't know this,
for her eyes are closed).

She doesn't know her eyes are closed,
and drifts a motion that approaches
nowhere, no-one; leaving,
but is leaving what? is leaving
whom? Is drifting here between
two destinations, maybe more,
arriving at a point that shifts,
that isn't coming nearer anywhere
because she doesn't know where
anywhere might be.

She doesn't know that movement
needs position; she is content to
float in frictionless and fruitless
inaction. She doesn't know
she is content.

II.

Across the drift of continents,
where coastlines are a memory of change,
and nothing penetrates the darkness of
the ocean's smile, he
moves with purpose; doesn't waver,
doesn't falter from the pattern which
his certainty suggests, and yet which
hides behind a tracery of random paths.

From sea to sea he follows shoals of
creatures which the depth has left distorted —
monstrous if they quit the place that
moulded their appearance. Light has
no meaning here; his eyes are shrivelled,
and his limbs — his limbs are odd, but
how or why cannot be said.

He remembers qualities and concepts that
he cannot comprehend; his life is
limited to what he has around him.
His desires are fleeting, unfulfilled,
unnoticed or not understood.
He doesn't know what he has shed; he
doesn't know what he has left.
He moves; he lives; he swims in
dark, cold certainty.