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# The Cow Says, I'm a Hippopotamus

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## Two Poems · *Dana Roeser*

### THE COW SAYS, I'M A HIPPOPOTAMUS

The cow says, I'm a hippopotamus,  
her head gliding, just breaking  
the water's surface.  
Colts are dolphins who nicker to us  
and to each other.  
They swim to the edges of their lake  
to nuzzle our pockets  
for carrots or sugar.

Lying on our bed, our ship,  
we hear gulls—no, geese—flying back north.  
Fish with silver scales,  
they touch the bottom of clouds,  
the top of their world,  
world of ocean,  
world of jet trails.  
The maples, the pines, the tulip poplars,  
200 years old,  
push their roots into the water below,  
their leaves into the water above.

Birdsong surrounds the room where we sleep,  
in the tree tops, in a sea chamber—  
mockingbirds, catbirds, beckoning.  
Restless,  
the cat sniffs the air like a seal.

At sundown  
clouds scud the sky;  
horses hammer their stall walls.  
When lightning's yellow arrows point to earth,  
you wake to watch the sky come down.