

2015

## Division of Labor

Christopher Kondrich

Follow this and additional works at: <https://ir.uiowa.edu/iowareview>

Part of the [Creative Writing Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Kondrich, Christopher. "Division of Labor." *The Iowa Review* 45.3 (2015): 56-57. Web.  
Available at: <https://ir.uiowa.edu/iowareview/vol45/iss3/8>

This Contents is brought to you for free and open access by Iowa Research Online. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Iowa Review by an authorized administrator of Iowa Research Online. For more information, please contact [lib-ir@uiowa.edu](mailto:lib-ir@uiowa.edu).

## *Division of Labor*

I'm wondering if I would have tied obligation  
to the wooden post of the dock if others hadn't already.  
Mine goes certain and uncertain on little swells  
the current makes dough of itself by kneading  
with the heels of uninformed hands  
lily pads with upturned edges ready to collect  
themselves incrementally. I send a part  
of myself from the boat to the village I read somewhere  
can swallow an I not into a crowd but into buildings,  
the *was constructed* of them, their *was here and loved*,  
pleats into which an I can slip and fade  
like water fades its temperateness to boiling. Which makes  
my body whistle, the I in me whistles, not absent luck  
or looseness, but through a fissure in the body  
that's always there between reaching and touching,  
the kind of fissure that makes the wall of me more apparent  
and the whistle sting more. Through the wall  
I watch my thought of looking up at the sail the wind  
fell out of and decide to send another part  
after the first, which, like the tail of a lizard, had grown back  
to bend and in bending had proven able,  
declared itself an ear to receive a call. Into village  
it responded by moving into admitting into  
its fragment the squares of on-the-surface I thought  
beautiful from the boat, beyond the surface  
were below-the-surface things like warble and treble

and a bar with wingback chairs  
where the part I sent first was ordering a Manhattan,  
not astonishing its piece into abeyance  
but into ice cubes projecting memory it collected  
like a bowerbird, something distant  
that had happened on its way from the boat,  
which was now one of many boats attributing to dock  
what they had learned from the ocean, that anything bobbing  
bobs because of anything else. Although the boats were empty,  
they had drifted together and were now each tapping  
the dock on its shoulder, without question  
a scene so solemn and tranquil I regretted sending it  
with the third part of someone I no longer resembled,  
which, I guess, was the point of the first part of me returning  
the smell of bourbon in a felted wooden box  
where its I had rested in the shape of itself  
taking shape through the spiral of a French horn. I gestured  
this part under the vinculum  
where an empty boat was  
waiting to be divided where the decimal sat  
along the center thwart my first part mirrored to  
without my face ever moving and before I intended  
to untie the boat, it was and I had  
left my second and third parts in the village  
not knowing if it was light out or dark.