Whale

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The oars are silenced.  
The silenced oars silence the echoing  
darkness and water, unscrew  
the lightbulbs of the phosphorescence.

You have shut your eyes to the sureness  
of that tactile evening, the whale  
like an old thumb-print of presence,  
the gray canvas damp at the surface,  
dark and enormous with a small, small eye.  
The digits at the shovel of the hand  
always knew they could not quite place it.

Listen. Echo is twining on stone.  
Marginal, intact, virtual, virtuous  
coracle. Rainbow arcs into the ear  
like old dry beans, like Mother's warning,  
like Wrath of Uncle, "What have we here?"

The vine holds on to what comes next, what  
happens: though the stone may crumble  
in Hellenic ruin; or be parked by the  
Empire mile, carved into, dumb, columbine-  
fresheted; or stacked up, handled, managed  
and handied by the Old Man of the Wall;  
or cobbled into overshoes and sunken  
down, hauling bones by the tarsals,  
hauling Zoot suit and cigar  
and meeting silt exploding  
where it must moan many years.

There the stone dreams of a center sun  
that blushes on the east at the skyline  
a branch that opens up a flower by blinking,  
a flame that rushes to the stove without thinking,  
without saying, "I don't know..."
There it dreams that echo swims by now,
dreams echo says to the stone,
you will once again see daylight,
there, there. Believe me,
echo only need hear.