1981

Postcard

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Postcard · Pamela Stewart

Dusk, the sea is between colors
And our medallion star is ready to leave for China.
This is the brushstroke hour
You have already befriended.

I am here for the first time
Taking a rush of water into my mouth.
My ribs fold with a white salt weight.

Centuries ago, Mu Ch’i slipped his eye
From fog to indigo. A grain of sand
Dislodged from a monastery wall.

His six bitter orbs of fruit
Are still blindingly pure.
And everyday
His seventh, unpainted persimmon
Ripens across the sky.

The bell-blossom moon follows behind.

Here, in California, the day shakes once
And falls. The ocean pulls closer.
With luck, you say,
A sudden streak will flash toward the stars
As the flaming persimmon dips into salt.

In this way the eye will complete the day.
It will root in the heart.
My hands return from water, the water
Returns from China.

I would unstain my heart to carry it with me.