Sleepwalker

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Sleepwalker

One night I found you pumping water from the neighbors’ well. Drinking greedily: nothing as fresh as the taste of iron. I let you finish. I watched your unsheathed thirst. When I woke you, a shudder like the shadow of a frenulum, the narrow band that keeps a moth’s wings from tearing apart in flight, crossed your face before you recognized me, or was it just after, the moment just after I spoke your name, when you remembered it was yours.

In the morning you have bruises, inky thumbprints on your hips from bumping the porch grill, but you’ve never truly hurt yourself, and I never know whether to wake you, you seem so serene, as if walking on water and all the ocean were yours, not just the kelp and herring that glint in the sun, but the deeper layers, eels and rays in the vertical dusk, even the blind crustaceans in absolute dark, where light has nothing to do with what makes you thrive.

And then I witness the awful moment when the part usurps the whole, and the vast, porous surface of what you see with shrinks to the iron chink of an eye.