BEYOND THE TIDE

is always the sea,
the unending, circular body
of gods and creatures
we barely know.
Land is
the pedestrian places of
all we live with.

For adventure,
read the tales of old sailors,
the tales of the dead.
The Sea of Cortez
full of shipwrecks as a thin man full—
bloated belly,
the paradoxical ocean.

Listen to each wave
tell of the greater body,
what's uncovered,
what's inundated.
We're looking for what lives in that space
between water and soil.

WESTERN FLYER
“In a small boat, the library should be compact and available.”
(The Log from the Sea of Cortez)

The engine shines with green paint and oil,
runs with order.
The tools are clean and in place.
Finding a crew
depends on who fully believes
in the dangers
of the Sea of Cortez,
but they'll learn to collect
quietly and
use the equipment,
cook the meals,
load what we'll never use.

She is our mother for the coming months—
what keeps us in this place of mystery.

THE HANSEN SEA-COW

No one knows when machinery takes on life,
yet we can see its action
by its menace.

Our Hansen Sea-Cow,
outboard motor to an angry Neptune,
propeller spun by Mara,
surely the factory worker, a fallen, lesser god,
loved, no one,
we decided.

Delight is difficult
to measure in metal life.
Hatred, instead, is calculable.

It isn’t that Tex, the mechanic,
hated the Sea-Cow—
it hated Tex.

THIS LAST DAY HOME
In Honor of Castillo Najera, Mexican Ambassador to Washington

We drank on our last night,
the same time as the sardine fiesta,
and woke on shore watching the beer cans roll in.

He gave us all the permits
and trusted us.
We knew he would not stay long in such a job; sure enough—he was a poet, too.

Now we're lifting our glasses. We're leaving, the journey ahead, Time to . . . ,

and one last drink to Mr. Castillo Najera, who understood—perhaps by verse, perhaps by having traveled there, what we are after.

BIOLOGIST

“Men really need sea-monsters in their personal oceans.”

(The Log from the Sea of Cortez)

Life is what a biologist studies, works toward at night in the arms of research,

wakes in the morning with questions, seeing what is there when in the field, knowing life is more.

There is a way to kill everything—stay analytic, count . . . and only count, make sure it is small and dying.

Our monsters drive up the sun over the water horizons. Biology gives them life.

OFF BAJA POINT

“For they do not know that they would carry their globes of boredom with them wherever they go.”

(The Log from the Sea of Cortez)

Water south of our native land is blue,
not the dull hue we know too well,  
but breathing and lush.

The San Diego locals gather at the dock to ask about our journey,  
watch our boat and long to go  
but do not know how to leave.

They look to us  
for adventure,  
and we say what they cannot.  
*Cast off the bow line!*  
*Cast off the stern line!*  
*Set sail! Time to leave!*

Put out the fishing lines.  
Keep them out, and we’ll take in yellow fin,  
here off Baja Point,  
this place of sea-turtles and flying fish,  
the water and mornings these folk know only as whim.

TAXONOMY

Whatever *is*  
lives in the vague place  
which swallows words  
inarticulate,  
until names  
make what we collect what we recognize.

*Katsuwonus pelamis.*  
Pleuroncodes.  
*Langustina.*

Now  
all the things  
we see  
with language we know,  
and the years we would need  
to let things name themselves,  
we leave to the natives or  
the naturalists with time  
to loiter over a thing.
SAN LUCAS

We drink warm *Carta Blanca*

in the bar

as the lost faces of young, local men

wonder why the *gringos*

can buy them beer and wear their new straw hats

when all they wanted

was to dream of our good life,

filled with all of what we have.

Buy *damiana*,

the local liquor of sex,

secret herbs,

which straighten a man out,

reminding him of the vulgar and earthy names we use

when we've been with something or someone really well.

In golden cities in the blessed desert of the Baja,

sad boys look at us

as we leave with our own hopes in these bottles.

**ALL**

“Then ecology has a synonym which is ALL.”

*(The Log from the Sea of Cortez)*

After having been with what's exotic long enough,

even the fragile colors

and other worldly animals

become like the boredom of last year's romance.

Collecting now

reminds us how we were once in love

with women varied and novel in their dress,

but sometimes when we are tired, go about this voyage

with all the hope of weary, dry-ball professors.

How can I tell them

that even our sight is alive.

However, seeing new *requires different intentions of the eye*,

Thoreau said.

    Looking closely, seeing what's far off, even on the horizon edge.
    Counting the species found and marveling at them too.

**ALL** isn't just what's out there.

**ALL** is continually believing it is.