

Kelp Chains

Under the surface of the sea
in the filter-drift of sand
the hair of the kelp reaches, and reaches,
for some point beyond the current,
tethered, by its base, to a rope that floats
up, from a concrete seafloor stack.

Above, in loud, cold air, turbines turn:
send power streaming down
through sub-sea neurons
connecting wind, through that land we do not think about -
the dark rock beneath us,
the everything, from which our lights turn on -
to that small portion we can map.

Take a boat: a small one, to come in close.
Out here, the land is a far-off line. You
become the screech and white sunlight,
screech becoming call,
a blue wash of salt and the sound and shadow.

Your skin is cold in the reaching, the water.
Pull up the ropes. Here are the strings of kelp,
not reaching any more: flat, in green hanks, the plant that grew
in salt, submerged, without soil. Only wanting
something to tether itself on, and half-seen light.
Lay it by. Put your face under the water.
Hold your breath:
come up gasping, feel the reaching for life within you.

Take it home.
It will nourish your body, as food:
lend you its strength, in its proteins.
Chains of sugars become the stuff of medicine;
alginate, a thickener for anything you choose.
It will give you wraps for food, like plastic, but harmless. Time
is no stranger to the lives of plants.

Carry it elsewhere, and use it.
Make the world cleaner, safer.
Live in homes made from trees, timber
that can withstand storms, but also, breathe.
Recall
this is how your heart wishes to be.
Think
as the wind lights your room and day-birds stream
home, to their still-living trees,
of the dreams that unite you
with the world beyond your reach,
but for which your heart reaches:

think of ocean currents that exist,
and give life,
because every drop of water is equal.

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