

New Poetry by Jim Kraus: "Amphibious"



ABOUT TO DISAPPEAR / *photo by Amalie Flynn*

AMPHIBIOUS

In Hokusai's "Kanagawa Wave," the boatmen
look like a school of masquerading fish
about to disappear into the vast trough between waves,
the scene a masque for the knowing seascape.

Underwater, Ahab,

pinned to the great white
creature, like a wave that has
disappeared into silence.

In memory's slow dancing,
flesh now dissolved,
seafloor muck covers bones
and shark-tooth nodules.

Out of the bubbling methane,
Ahab is reborn with tripod limbs
and tiny feet, the wooden leg
now a trail of seafloor slime,
amphibious.

New Poetry by Suzanne O'Connell: "Airport Luggage Carousel" and "Shipwreck"



IMAGINE GOLD DOUBLOONS / *image by Amalie Flynn*
Airport Luggage Carousel

A battered cardboard box

holes punched in the side
tied with frayed rope
lid popping up
plastered with masking tape, wrinkled.
One lone orphan
going round and round the luggage carousel,
heading nowhere.
Packed in chaos.
Full of soiled clothes
bloody Kleenex
unpaid bills
splinters
and Dear John letters.

This is what the last year has been.

So I imagine the contents differently.
I imagine gold doubloons,
a child's drawing of a rainbow,
a coupon for a free fried chicken dinner.
Maybe a photograph of a family, at Christmas,
standing together on a hillside,
everyone wearing red and green,
the husband holding a puppy,
and Carol,
still alive.

Shipwreck

She sniffed my trenches,
turned away from the skin she made,
her own thick blood
flowing in my waterways.
Me, a vacant dwelling on the shore,
wearing swaddling,
drinking low-fat milk.

Oh, wire mother of the soul,
entertainer of strangers.
She of too many decibels,
too many bright colors,
passing macaroons to visitors
while I carved "I love Chris"
in the dining room table.

Find the fur coat,
find the hairdresser,
find the beach umbrella
find the wine coolers
find the plants in pots
resigned to death.

Little fish swim by her ankles.
Like me, they long for contact.
Mercy, the color of the sea,
never granted.
In that day, at that hour,
on that wretched beach,
she wanted an audience
but found only me.

New Poetry from Alison Hicks: "I Took A Walk With A Friend" and "Untitled"



AWAY INTO SEA / *image by Amalie Flynn*

I TOOK A WALK WITH A FRIEND

Instead of starting a poem

I told her about my son's first semester
As long as he's home & happy & in one piece, she told me

Worry squeaked out my sneakers onto wet pavement
The rest dissolved with the pitcher of margaritas

Though it was wet & rainy
I did not get a headache

Married for thirty-four years
We selected the movie about divorce

By the time we finally got to watch it
He fell asleep

*The book was about a friendship that started in
graduate school*
I skipped ahead to the parts where she snorted OxyContin

Didn't want to think about graduate school
But stayed up reading the juicy parts anyway

Personally, I blame the recliner

UNTITLED

The sea is a room without walls. It spills, falling over land.
Land shears away into sea,
rooms echo with spills and falling walls. Walls are powerless
in the war of land and
water, swells uproot trees, sweep cars, shopping carts,
diamond necklaces out to sea,
rooms of plastic ingots drifting down. The sea has room,
gathering spoils from falling lands.

(UNTITLED is included in Hicks' new book *Knowing Is A Branching Trail*, winner of the 2021 Birdy Prize and forthcoming in mid-September from Meadowlark Books.)