

## Fractal Geometry

Looking for a place to stash a key on the porch, or a love note you should not have anymore, or fifty thousand drug dollars just for this week, you realize that all the places you think of are the same you would think of if you were the one looking. Why not look now, or now and then, for what might be hidden? What is your lover, roommate, coworker, keeping almost in plain sight? Perhaps it's duty to rid them of their secrets and superfluous keys. We know from political rhetoric that social programs only make people dependent on them. Well Mrs. Jovovic next door should learn to remember her damn fob when she leaves her apartment once a month. Christmas accounts, too, must breed this sort of weakness. You need to just not spend that money by being constantly aware of abstract future expenses. I should empty your EpiPen and like Jeff Bridges in *Fearless* you will eat tree nuts on a cliff.

It is dizzying imagining all the spaces things can fit into. Where is a bank account? A password yields a number but not the place or the look of the bills or any fact, like whether a phone number is written on one, or whose. The ocean can drive you crazy with its paranoiac concealments. Manatees, coral reefs, krakens and mythic monsters no one can prove aren't real, and the big guns: shipwrecks, garbage, undersea islands of netted toothbrushes and razors and the ten million gallons of oil that disappeared in the Gulf of Mexico but must be there. You even heard there is a lake underneath the sea, which has probably already been misplaced or the map that located it tucked thoughtlessly into a garment bag after an oceanographers' conference and then donated to Goodwill because its left wheel broke.

Surely fish and algae, crabs and plankton live there, evolved  
for nowhere else. And science tells us the smaller an organism  
the greater numbers it can have because the less space each needs  
to find purchase, so a crevasse that can support one orchid  
can host a million duckweeds tucked into invisible notches.  
Sometimes you want not just to enter that lake, but all its apertures.  
Sometimes your thoughts drive you there, and you get trapped  
behind an opening you somehow fit through when you entered.  
Water within water finds its way into parts of you you'll never touch:  
the inner ear, the nasal conchae, the ever so small pockets of your lungs.

# Flowers Are Not Women

And women are not flowers  
any more than a man  
is a message nailed to a plinth  
threatening challenge to strangers.  
He is not always or ever an arrow  
or leather unless you degrade him  
with knife and spectacle.  
A man is not a dog, or a woman a cat,  
although all can be felled  
by associations and cars and cold.  
It is terrible how men can crumble  
like pizzelles in a child's paw.  
Or a woman harden as metal in a forge,  
submit like a Camry to rust.

It is almost not enough to witness  
the soft thing at the center, the delicate,  
life-making thing, not humbled,  
but caressed, grown large  
and loved or just touched well.  
It almost doesn't blot out jails  
sick men enter to turn bad  
or running men shot on lawns  
like they stand for sport.

Men naked, men in love, men  
imperiously ruled by the stone moon.  
They are night-blooming things.  
They cannot be made cheap  
for sale in supermarkets  
on Mother's Day or noncommittal

office birthdays. They can die without  
interference though they rarely do.  
They remind me of everything  
I ever wanted to buy expensive dirt for  
and water a little too often  
and share with no one.