

## A HOLE IN THE BUCKET

“With what shall I fix it?”–

    O little stranger  
 little shorn off water  
 I feel my ocean breaking  
 in a cloud us has always been  
 rain even as mud herds it  
 a slowness that ghostburns  
 a slowness nearly craters  
 revolving in the sky

O doctor, astronomer  
 even Sappho’s words were  
 shorn from each other Tears  
 and lake are twin: orphans  
 draw a map on the chalkboard  
 how love blights the farms  
 between towns dust residences

Rain is not caused but carried  
 and sometimes the wheels roll themselves  
 away from a carriage, over cliffs  
 otherwise tender, otherwise geology

We root for us down inside the brackets  
 replicate moon by weeping  
 when a cloud spills overvalley  
 we are so away from moon so  
 we nurse the tide enough  
 to reflect it

Not our salt measures craters  
 revolving in sky, but somehow  
 water rises, like letters  
 arrange themselves into sentences  
 for a little shorn off ocean

The moon’s tattoo  
 will never glow  
 underneath the ocean in me  
 phosphorescence falling down  
 a Greek ladder on the moon’s back,

no horizontal rung beneath the  $\pi\epsilon\phi\tau\omicron$ <sup>1</sup>  
 how rain precedes its halo

Memory distills a pictogram  
 to sound, hears a face  
 in leaves falling off a tree,  
 light moves faster, reflecting  
 off eyelashes but voice  
 is no mirror it’s a cobbler,  
 tunnel waiting for wind

It seemed wrong to flood  
 the coming century with mournful  
 before how worldfingers  
 begin while mine rehearse the end,  
 a minnow  
 in a cradle  
 where the ocean  
 won’t get buried Tide  
 never not  
 craves a moon  
 so mud lay down a lake  
 for tide to sleep in

O little stranger, there are carvers  
 slicing glow the sky  
 fells on a lake Moon  
 make cattails sway  
 help me fail kinder  
 map the pollen under water  
 with my tongue What proximity  
 makes it wet? This seriousness  
 is all too elegant wrongness  
 when our everybody you and sometimes heart  
 crawls under his fence  
 Nuzzle a twin and color  
 peel away from lumber  
 They are paint on the sidewalk and  
 shiny is how you smell  
 and nearly the forest behind it

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<sup>1</sup> Pronunciation: Pefto. I mistook the Greek word for a ladder, simultaneously I fall and to fall.