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## Ferry Ride and Taking Leave of Friends

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## FERRY RIDE

(Puget Sound, Washington)

The great boat glides by,  
a red kite on an unseen wire  
wavering behind it like an afterthought.  
We move between worlds: the water  
a blue field ferries plow,  
sheened flat enough by sun  
to walk on; the land, dark  
with hemlocks wrapped in their boughs  
like monks in winter. Our thoughts  
are full of semicolons, ride  
invisible wires before words flag out  
at their ends like kite tails.  
Our hearts, locked in our bodies  
like two lamps in a footlocker.  
We stare hard at the darkening water,  
the gulls' throats as they wheel and sob,  
and when we dare, each other.  
As far into the night as the engine,  
boat's heart, beats below deck,  
we glide toward each other—waves  
that cross—and leave our echoes,  
the thrum and clangor of bells  
under the water. We lock  
in the dark between moons,  
beat our hearts from hiding;  
then kiss, turn our respective cheeks,  
and give ourselves to every moment  
that we sleep: our lives, in dream,  
two rows of lights winking  
off a long pier toward the sea.

## **TAKING LEAVE OF FRIENDS**

(Lake Union Dock, Seattle)

A spot picked at damp random  
to break through: the line of docks  
spattered with creosote, workmen  
hosing down a seaplane on the fritz,  
silence in the beam-strewn yards  
between warehouses. How will we get out  
of this one? you ask the red ant  
toppled from a rusted cable to your thigh.  
Migrations are the mainstay: a gaggle  
of honkers lined up on the shore,  
calls hollow with tundra, thawed ice  
booming under all-night sun.  
Long sad distances unravel  
from their bandaged throats.  
Strange currents catch the skirts  
of your thoughts on the updraft.  
You forget time here, forget rhyme, reasons  
for coming, half your name. Who could ask  
where you're going, who would you change  
your life for, whether you'd put a bookmark  
in your heart and rise and follow?  
Who would know how true you are, no matter  
what the year, no matter what the rip tides  
of your blood washed in? Clouds  
piling up on the horizon show you  
who your friends are, love  
the outbound bus you climb aboard,  
your strongest word goodbye.