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Currents

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CURRENTS

Cadiz, Spain. 1967

The rich girls walked arm in arm,
untouchable, big silver crucifixes
between their breasts, while the men
in outdoor cafes smacked their lips
at the country girls
too poor to forget their bodies.
Each night my blonde wife and I
would leave our house for shrimp
and baby eels, or sherry and langostinas,
and the men turned and turned,
whispered and made gestures.
The ships came in. The whores from
San Fernando vied with the whores from Cadiz.
At Carnival, amidst the crowds,
it was possible to touch a rich girl's ass.
Sundays it all exploded;
the bulls dipped into the horses,
the matadors into the bulls,
then the streets filled up again
with a wild vicariousness.
Late that summer, I'd skin dive
for moray eels. You had to anger them
so they'd charge, shoot the spear
straight down their throats
after the huge mouths opened.
I was never brave enough
to catch one, though I wrote a poem
one dreamy morning
about bringing an eel back to my wife,
how she took it from me
and held it.