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overhearing water

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overhearing water

ears pressed i listen
the drowsy delta
sea-salt deep in my nostrils
used for the morning & evening meals
water pumped from the sewage the streets
rush down legs
& alleyways (rooms wet from thought)
clink against
sodden sidewalks odored
with my hair as i wash upon rising
clothes washed scrubbed
sound of tubs
agreeing in the sudsy hands
of a woman her willful children about her

i want to dream but i hear

women pailing men pumping

ion luring ion

electron repulsing electron gurgling

feet always wet faces hands

winter comes

we wash in the cold

in doused nights

seasick the straw mat on which at midnight a cat tramples

i want to breathe but what breath

a woman still washes her husband's and daughter's clothes

wringing the clothes hushed

between life & death

i hear poured into round tubs

emptied choke

of water tub against concrete

the woman rinses her hands & feet

