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### Sea Ode

Although remoter than remotely  
from this keyboard city  
of tumescent skyscrapers  
they call the medina  
of bytebrats and cybercats,  
I come across traces of you  
(as one stumbling upon the perfume  
of a fugitive era  
is suddenly made fugitive)—  
in the rinsed restless irises  
of an oil-presser from Cadiz,  
in the spiteful sibilance  
of a St.Kilda shipwreck,  
in the Fraulines of a dowager  
scandalized by a pissing cherub.  
Morning and night, I sense  
your sublunar passions  
in the mournful heaving of tidal traffic  
scoffed by exultant moons.  
Outside Signor Montale's  
vine-jibbed trattoria  
your sad, jilted mermaids  
daub their severed, writhing braids

## FULCRUM

in Sicily's sweetbitter sauces.  
None but they can discern  
(through garlic rosaries  
swaying from waisted rafters)  
why a swollen, gusting sheet—  
revenant in sunlight—  
sparks me up the mizzenmast  
to bawl for roiling streetcars.  
Strange blubber! Stranger Quaker  
whose harpooned trophies  
thrash about in seething wordhives.  
Yet, since the wick of longing  
battens on the fat  
of your butchered leviathans,  
poetry too is culpable,  
just as this foul gargoyle  
sneering from its voluted eyrie  
in the Victorian quarter  
is culpable in the pitiless history  
that provoked the sneer.  
But now that the sneered at,  
*scenting modernity,*  
ride with the sneering pack,  
you alone remain guiltless.  
And cast by traces  
into your sacramental swells,  
I'm the legendary drowned swimmer  
astonished to discover  
his lungs commending water.