

hiraeth at high tide

Hari Kumar

the ocean embraces me
like a new neighbor, hesitant
and oddly shallow, slowly,
bit by bit, its hands a gust of
air that pats me on the small of my
back, all boneless brine and
the taste of salt quite bland

the ocean looks to me to pick
the piles of plastic out of its wavy hair,
pluck its fallen ships and planes from its skin,
and carry its newborn marine life tenderly
out of its arms knowing they won't return,
though mournfully do its waters churn

i look to the ocean to hold me close
to its prickling, demystified depths, in
someone, anyone's reassuring arms,
forgiving my sudden sleep even though i
still wanted to ride my bicycle into the night,
deposited into the next room, covered in warm
sheets,
while the loving laughter never misses a beat

we are children born with consequences,
houses with no home to look forward to,
so sacred that we can't be defiled by each other,
which is why i must take a breath every
now and then, step away from the shore,
just to remember, just to feel,
that as a house, orphans with the ocean,
that i must be hollow for a very good reason
i am a house, devoid of furniture or residents, true,
but i do not need a fluid suburb or city of foam
surrounding me to become a home