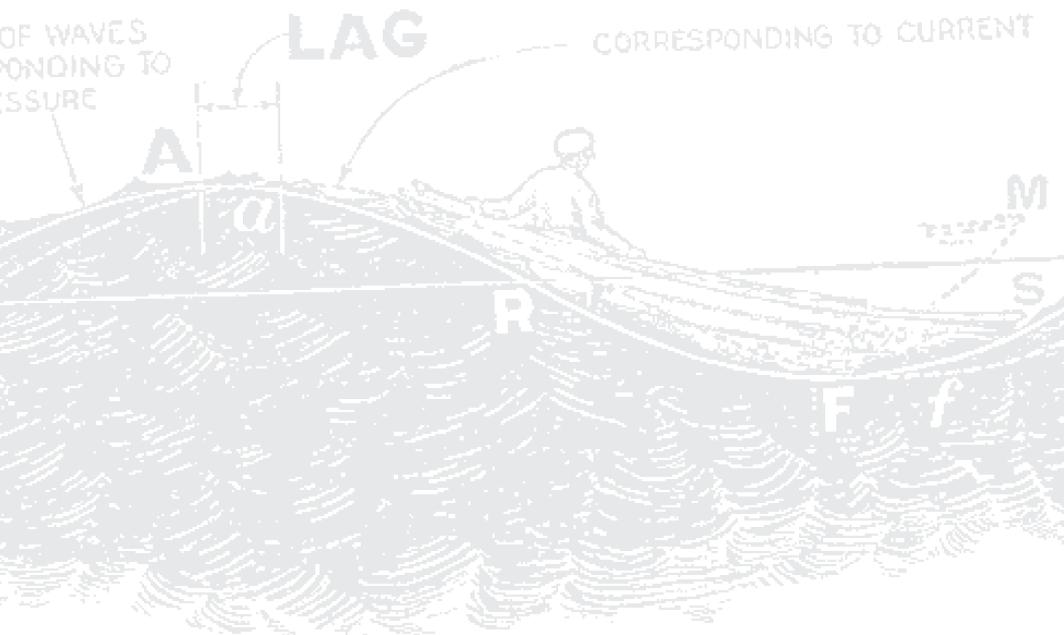


and a
wave
means
we are
not
drowning



There have been centuries before
I suppose

we're here now
washed light through a cool basin sky
a colour that will not tell the secrets of landscape
had this place been discovered

it would be morning

because we're awake
we are less simple

sleep drains wine from cornea glass
the way the earth forms our backs
why rise
unless it's not all *up* from here
plateau stretching to mist
and likely something looming

a thought:

these arms and legs beg movement
and turn your head (tentative
we might not work this way)
see for the first time beside you
my head turned also
where I've been watching for a long time
your flow
dark metallic pool to blue skin

of all the things you don't know
am I solid
the names to discover
rock perhaps slug or tree
the questions we are unsure how to phrase
how we first realize the *more than instinct*
control of spinning quiet
desire

touch
much less touch our own fingertips
magnets of equal pole send
electrons circle forearms
intersect the spine
are drawn to the nerve end
of opposing fingers
and burn there

or what it means to listen
when unaware our breath
the long calm exhale in the air
a body of water close by
floating wind across the crag and scar
of all those centuries before

the sound of filling hollow

you'd think there'd be something to say
a progression on the evolution of stone
a misunderstanding of melody
we will one day perceive
as an accident of birth

we lie here missing
not quite you and not quite a rock
unsure and dangling
our only hope for complete
resting on a gesture not unlike
the gentle raising of a hand
a first shy offering

hi

and can't fail in this
yet likely hear nothing in return
until we add

may I help you?

gain perhaps a turning of the head.

So let's say time passes
we learn our arms and legs
and walk awhile
and find close by fresh water
and kneel

submerge our heads

just looking

and let's say we also stand along the shore
to watch ourselves kneel
heads submerged
not knowing what we see there
denying how ludicrous it seems
after all it's us
and we'd prefer to think this
the natural order of things

it remains this way for a long time:

us on the shore
our heads under water
eyes open until eventually
someone blinks
 (accepts this also as natural)
a distortion of light rising to surface
cresting to ripple
a measure of distance
something to stare off into

the beginning of conversation

we are talking to ourselves



and you are not supposed to feel this way
no more shyness
four thousand years too intelligent to fall in love
the small part to be included
and all the great things we've come to expect from you

it's late morning on the fire escape
when I tell you of Lake Minnewaka

my body's imprint on rock
the glacial blue reflecting
the Cascades' rise from the far shore
and *have I ever been more at peace?*
my heat-blurred vision
a tern circling

circling an effortless coast and glide
as I watch and wonder
do birds simply fly for the joy of it
circling and easy
changing path as if to say
I am leaving you forever
the water remains as cold as sweet
dissolving into mountains
I can't be sure it was ever there

or is it afternoon
driving the colour of wind in your hair
we pass that first breath of fresh water
its blond reflection dancing
and see something floating there and gone
the way the sun is sometimes

we could leave without a trace
 a moment to lose
or we could check the mirror for surface
turn our heads
could've been a body
a sea monster
a tree so old on the edge of a lake
before there is such a thing as lakes
with initials carved
that is hit by lightning
that is bleached in the sun

the question is not whether this time
there are gloves in the glove compartment
but do we need to search there

knowing the way you unfold time
I follow the ancient road-maps
to the feeling I have sometimes
your fingers through my hair
as you miles from here *touch*
candles burn suspension
an invisible wax drip dew
beads your skin warms you

I feel the heat