

*We were the first that ever burst into that silent sea*

and the mariner held his wife in bed  
as if she were fifty  
    leagues of rope slung  
leaden over his shoulder  
acquiescing and fluid  
she  
was dreaming of a white dress,  
    unworn  
of tripping over rings of fire  
of women with flung open jaws  
naked and exultant under  
a harvest moon

at low tide  
at the hour of unspeakable heat  
    she arches skin to meet its maker  
as the church bells  
    beg  
and  
the organ  
    squeals  
she tells her groom  
to walk a tightrope between  
pews and deep sea  
to listen to her  
enchantments like scripture  
like every spell she cast was a holy  
a divine leap across the  
wood floor, littered with  
abandoned playthings and  
locked chests from her days  
in the circus, agile and aloft

but now, holding tight to her lover,  
she holds her breath and  
prepares to swim  
on endless, open waters