

## **THE WOMAN IN THE POOL**

The element that loves her closes round,  
which she must work against, or surely drown.  
While it laps her limbs, sheets down her back,  
she reaches, scoops, pulls down the slippery track.  
It's joy to struggle in this luscious groove,  
so wholly drenched while mostly free to move.  
Her tireless woman's thighs churn up the wet,  
leaving swirls that follow with regret  
that water's grasp, complete but all too weak,  
must graciously support what it can't keep.  
And when the surface calms from its alarm,  
she comes rolling back, arm over arm.  
She trails an open kiss above her wake,  
just high enough for every breath she takes,  
then briefly lays her face into its clasp  
to mutter mermaid's notes, that will not last.  
Her coiling reach--breath, pull, and glide--  
Propels her preference for the solid side.  
The water begs her to let distance grow,  
to roll in rhythmic dance, and only know  
the dream of muscles and the banging blood  
that loosen slowly in its friendly flood--  
till pain, regret, and every suffered fool  
dissolve like brittle crystals in its pool.  
Its plea is sweet, and so irrational.  
What's asked for here, that she develop gills?  
With rippling sophistry it makes the claim  
they two are seventy percent the same;  
that bouyant gifts prove something else than death  
when lovers learn how to release their breath.  
I was the water for your measured joy:  
the steady girl, her too, too malleable boy.  
Your duty done, you slipped my flowing sleeves,  
got out and showered, dried off and dressed to leave.  
The ripples that you made grow cool and flat.  
It was such joy, but you are done with that.