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PROTEUS

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Water and Our World



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NOTES OF A ZAHORÍ (WATER DIVINER)

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Landscape/seascape

Stories pressed down over centuries.

(Your hand,
a piece of driftwood
twisting in the waves.)

Banyan trees uprooted in the last hurricane. Enormous trunks, a canopy of branches, but shallow roots that grow under the walkways and crack the concrete. *Wayang*, upheaval of the gods. The night the street became a river. I placed my feet on pavement and it flowed away beneath my feet.

New Year's beach. Jellyfish noon. And little boys with their teddy bear armwings to keep themselves afloat. Silly seagulls bob in the waves; medusas beguile them with their translucent sacs of venom.

The years fly by, but now and then, an ocean rises up to inundate our days. Oceans in the middle of a city where roosters crow from rooftops in the humid dawn.

(This water self
the world will not accept)

Always, circles in the sand. Small children with a stick. Rings. A larger hand pulling them back from the waves.

From rough rocks lining the road, amateur fishermen cast their nets. All they bring up are worthless needlefish, but they practice and practice, holding one piece of the net between their teeth. The wind carries their words away.

(Always battered women on the shore in slashed veils.)

Full moon of the restless star. Crystal-vase ocean at three in the morning.

Some look for water underground. Others look for long-abandoned bombs.

There is a difference.