poems from
the sea argots

Susana Gardner
POEMS FROM

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In memory of Marthe Reed, dear dear friend, poet and indy publishing co-conspirator.

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THE YEAR
THE SEA
CARRIED HER
THE SEA
CARRIED HER

Warblers and the flashing brilliance of.
Language pushed along a current of memory.
In the absence of memory, language insinuates itself.
Marthe Reed, (em)odied bliss

“Lat nat this wrecched wo thyn herte gnawe,”
Chaucer’s *Troilus and Criseyde*, 1374.
THE YEAR THE SEA CARRIED HER

the sea carried her  lulled her
in the days and months    passing    and then    the years
the years    of repeat    before words    the year    the sea
and sun willed her    strange    carriage
adrift and reeling    recollected    this time was    mute as flow state
as all else    was water    and other    when the summer green grass first
collided with wind in its soft gray    hush    this is all she knew
of the time before    before she first heard    its sound or roar or
knew its true name    after first becoming    and    knowing    then
who she was    a varied state    of    trajectory an altered course since
the first    meeting    the sea    and she so young
but    the sea    always knew her    and would become her again    and
through    as her then had shifted    into    a very different state of self
reset again    into unending restless waves    held    into renewed    lapsing
THE YEAR THE SEA CARRIED HER

THE SEA CARRIED HER was the year

the sea first carried her was

the year she least felt its carry

its swell felted weights about her feet

she was young and she was could now head into the waves

alone when the air was heavy

with pressed speech weighted her down

around her a bag of serrated shells

collected pressing and

pushing inward

into a sharp twisted brackish

scraping sandy relief
first her body went numb with cold

a seacold release into a summer so hot

and dripping and stunted in contrast when she left

the water and stepped to the tide-line

she was already dry and felt

the pressing inward again apart

from her hair eyes stinging

salt water stained skin dry

by the time collapsed into her faded

towel she dug in again deeper into the sand

making hollows to envelop her waiting to be called

and called back
THE SEA CARRIED HER

in the year the sea first carried her
into the dredges and sandbars
reached out and tumbled her
into its arms held her
in contrast and distinct relief
as enviable wet-wet relief
inevitable until
THE SEA CARRIED HER

THE YEAR
THE SEA
CARRIED HER

stirred and
stirred
her flesh toward
awake
a first
swirling
down
and down
then up wrested
but unknown
renaissance
of repeat
among
sea stars
THE YEAR THE SEA CARRIED HER

as she soared above her self

body among waves with only a gentle tether

her body felt removed and separate

as sand accumulated in the crotch of her suit and pressed and

pressed her down and down though she did not think about

any of this at the time she simply was

a girl might fall down and down down drowning into

the furred-hole of repeat of a sea swirling

turning up mucky and murky sand forced up

and up and as quickly pounding down again

into the salt dredge light and then into darkness
THE YEAR THE SEA CARRIED HER

this was the year she first saw the
sea as a larger being something greater
than herself and a part from her
self felt its calm release when she
stopped beating and beating back
and back against it her histories or given
narratives and timeline though minor
after the waves after she gave in again
when she was just a girl at last
THE YEAR THE SEA CARRIED HER

THE SEA CARRIED HER fixed again and again and freed released from this moment at last when the white-haired old woman scooped her up by the back-straps of her suit and pulled her back from that glistening beyond and set her down again swiftly until she was steady the girl looked to shore confused and then back again though she was gone the woman with the white-haired ponytail and one-piece floral suit had disappeared into the surf
THE SEA CARRIED HER

THE YEAR THE SEA CARRIED

the sea

strained her  the sea choked her  it stained her

salt-water coughed  up and up  from her

lungs and nose  and the roar  was

still in her with her  the crashing

was all around  she looked to

the shore and then  again

toward the silver haired woman in the

black and floral one-piece who had been right there  was now gone

and she  frantically looked around and back  and

back into the waves behind her which crumpled her

again  but now she was closer to to the shore  and struggled

to get there and continued coughing until  she was

hoarse and sick with salt  and  mixed  dread

and that newness of what  it is to be  shored
THE YEAR THE SEA CARRIED HER

THE SEA
CARRIED HER

when and it was then

that she first understood

what was always there

was never really

hers
THE YEAR THE SEA CARRIED HER

and carried with her the why the
why didn’t she beat the waves
harder? instead of swallowing the
briny water after it hammered
down and down upon her small
shell and why had she allowed
the cool rage to enter her?
instead of going further and
further down and instead of the
cool release of what she seemingly
wanted pulled back and back
down as she was lifted
THE YEAR THE SEA CARRIED HER

THE SEA CARRIED HER

lifted from all else and

somehow absolved from that

inward pressing if only for that

singular moment

the salt had carried her

kept her afloat as

she rose up from

endless wave on

wave assault
THE YEAR THE SEA CARRIED HER

in that familiar blue-blue
drink floated in her for weeks
months what seemed years
succumbed for an eternity or two
a year or just days or many days
and their succession and years
repeat wholed her up again
in a new form
THE YEAR THE SEA CARRIED HER

THE SEA CARRIED HER but never
felt like enough because
it never feels like enough as things
never do feel like enough until far-off
hindsight or retelling which is more of a
assuaged phenomena versus
concrete but the living story is also important
the story that soothes and so this is a later
feeling that is also unknowingly false or were
things were once enough
that are no longer?
THE YEAR THE SEA CARRIED HER

was a spacious nothing as sound
carried waves when
waves were metaphors
or parables or couched frets
or slatterned recurrent kisses
lit spaces of another time
she would always imagine
or cull up as it might have been or
could possibly be hers or least
within her years her yet
everything different and other
and somehow this new familiar
she would learn to hold inward
like breath often constant
and knowing which shifts a
division of what had occurred
THE YEAR THE SEA CARRIED HER

THE SEA CARRIED HER among
seabones while boats flew midair
sailing overhead while fishers
with maidens would ride saddled
fat fish phantoms carry torches
small bits of light
illuminating
the sea-same
sky
THE YEAR THE SEA CARRIED HER

she was a girl when she first felt the tug of the sea her eyes were blue and common or flat blue-gray shells endless stones of light streaming like god or energy or whatever she might have once understood as holy the sun its pointed light bright and pounding waves dense her eyes sometimes blue lines of repeat sometimes grey changing color of the sea around her when the rage of swells first spoke reflected from her eyelets open windows of light collecting
THE YEAR THE SEA CARRIED HER

THE SEA
CARRIED HER

carried her
as desire
always
as desire
is always
and all ways
always
THE YEAR THE SEA CARRIED HER

everything waved what came before in repeat
would inevitably come again
this was the comfort if not rationality
of rhw repeat her toes in the sand
the dipped groove
The sea carried her every swell
lulling her

the sea

or, every swell held her

carried her

as every

every year

every day, every year

without her knowing

every fear every

sea thus

settled her

held and held her

a constant rocking

every seathus lulling her

THE YEAR THE SEA CARRIED HER
THE SEA CARRIED HER

THE YEAR THE SEA CARRIED HER AT FIRST LIGHTLY
SO HUSH SO SO HUSHED AND LACED OVER HER LIMBS
CALMED HER IN ITS LATCHED SWELL CAME
AS AN ABSTRACT REPEAT AS A SORT OF KNOWING SOME
HOW CELLULAR NOTION WHICH CARRIED ITSELF OUT AND IN
AND OUT AGAIN IN ITS ROAR A TIDAL REPEAT ON FOR
YEARS AS IT EBBED IN AND OUT AND THEN OUT AND IN
AND FIRST CLAIMED HER CARRIED HER GENTLY THEN
FASTER AND FURTHER AS IT BECAME HER THUS
AND SO SHE WAS NOW A PART OF IT AND IT
FAILED HER IT FAILED HER WITH SUCH FURY
OVER AND OVER SHE THUS THEN SHE AMID A SEA
A SEA SO FURIOUS IN ITS REPEAT IN ITS AWESOME SWELL
IN ITS CARRIAGE AS IT CARED AND CARRIED HER FROM
YEAR TO YEAR AND COAST TO COAST ALWAYS BACK AGAIN
WITHOUT WARNING EACH YEAR SOLID AND ANEW
WEIGHTED AS IT WAS NEW TO HER IT WAS EVEN WILDER
AND MORE SEPARATE THAN ONE MIGHT EVER IMAGINE
AND SWEET YET SIMILARLY FOLDED WHEN IT FLOWERED AND
OPENED UP TO HER AT LAST AND LATER PULLED HER IN AS
THE VAST SEA THUS SALT AND BRINE AND WEED ENTANGLED
THE YEAR THE SEA CARRIED HER

THE SEA CARRIED HER HER HER SEA CARRIED CALMED HER KNOTTED HER HAIR IN ITS THUS THUS STATE IN THIS THE SEA STAINED HER YEAR IT ENTWINED ENTANGLED HER AS IT GALLOPED IT WAVED IT GUUFFAWED IT ROARED IT SWAYED AS IT FAWNED OVER HER AND AS IT FURLED HER IN AND THEN BACK BACK INTO THE YEAR TO YEAR AND COAST TO COAST BACK AGAIN ROCKS OR TIDELINE OR RIVER’S EDGE BECKONED HER THEN RECEIVED HER AND THREW HER BACK AND BACK BACK FASTER AND FURTHER SURGING INTO THIS SEA PAST THE STONE POTS AND KETTLES LITTERED UPON THE SHORE SLICK WITH MOSS MEAD THE SEA HER SEA FORCED HER FIRST FAMILIAR THAT AGAINST THE SUN THE YEAR SHE FIRST KNEW THE SEA THAT CAME AFTER HER THE YEAR LATER SHE WOULD KNOW THAT THE SEA HAD ALWAYS CARRIED HER THE WET WET SEA HELD HER OVER AND THROUGH HER WHOLE SUIT DRANK IT AS IT TANGLED HER HAIR ITS STRANGE ANEMONES TENTACLES AND SLICK GREENY WEEDS THAT HELD HER ITS PRICKLY MISSTEP SPURS OF BECOMING AS SHE THE SAME SEA AS IT CARRIED HER OUT OUT OUT AGAIN BY THE SEA SHE IN THE AND IN THE AND WITH THE SEA AND SEE THE WITH SEA AS IT WAS THUS THE SAME SEA THEN THE SAME SEA THUS AS THE
THE YEAR THE SEA CARRIED HER THE YEAR THE SEA CARRIED AND CARRIED HER FURTHER AND FURTHER OUT BORE HER AGAIN AND AGAIN AS IT GROOMED HER IT STAVED HER CHAFED HER INNER THIGHS BACK INTO RAW TIDE SPIT HER BACK OUT INTO A JETTISON OF PEBBLES AND FLOTSAM WEED REPEAT SPIT HER BACK WITH SEASCUM UNTIL THE NEXT AND NEXT AND NEXT REPEAT THE DAYS THE YEARS AND THE WAVES ABYSS WHICH FIRST DREW HER AND DAZZLED HER TOWARD ITS GLINT AND SILVERED AND SLIVERED SHIMMER WITH HER IN THE SEA PROWESS THUS PROVED SOLID THAT SEA THAT CHARMED HER SWAYED HER LULLED HER OUT AND OUT AS IT FORBADE HER FASTER AND FURTHER SURGING INTO THIS SEA PAST THE STONE POTS AND KETTLES LITTERED UPON THE SHORE SLICK MOSS MEAD THE SEA
THE YEAR THE SEA CARRIED HER

THE SEA CARRIED HER SHE BECAME ENTWINED AND GREW IN RIFTS AS IT MUST NOT AS ONE IS SHOWN BUT IN FEELING IN ITS COASTAL CARRIAGE CARRIED CARESS AND CAJOLED HER IN AND IN FURTHER IN YEAR BY YEAR THE SEA OR THE SEA SO SOMULENT CARRIED HER THE SEA CARRIED HER WITHOUT WARNING THE YEAR SOLID AND WEIGHTED AS IT WAS NEW TO HER IT WAS EVEN WILDER AND MORE SEPARATE THAN ONE MIGHT EVER IMAGINE AND SWEET YET SIMILAR AND FOLDED WHEN IT OPENED UP TO HER AT LAST AND LATER PULLED HER IN AS THE SEA CARRIED HER THE VAST SEA THUS SALT AND BRINE AND WEED ENTANGLED HER HER SEA CARRIED CALMED HER KNOTTED HER HAIR IN ITS THUS THUS STATE IN THIS THE SEA STAINED HER YEAR AFTER YEAR IT ENTWINED AND ENTANGLED HER AS IT GALLOPED IT WAVED IT GUFFAWED IT ROARED IT SWAYED AS IT FAWNED OVER HER AND AS IT FURLED HER IN AND THEN BACK BACK ONTO THE ROCKS OR TIDELINE OR RIVER'S EDGE BECK- ONED HER THEN RECEIVED HER AND THREW HER BACK AND BACK BACK FASTER AND FURTHER SURGING INTO THIS SEA PAST THE STONE POTS THE YEAR THE SEA CARRIED HER AGAIN ASHORE DERELICT AWASH ANEW ITS SADDLE WET WITH FURY
THE YEAR THE SEA CARRIED HER Slick and sead-runk, the sea her sea forced her first familiar that against the sun the year she first knew the sea that came after her the year later she would know that the sea the year the sea carried her and had always carried her. The wet wet sea held her over and through her whole suit drank it as it tangled her hair a whole knowing within its strange anemones and slick greeny weeds that held her its prickly misstep spurs of becoming as she became and grew in it in rifts as one must do not as one is shown but in its carriage carried caressed and cajoled her in in further in year by year the sea or the sea so somulent carried her floated her on its back into the drifts and debts and depths and deaths of speckled weed and she sometimes waved to the shore or even to further out-specks of land that were mostly imagined as the great expanse was more often blue than not.
THE YEAR THE SEA CARRIED HER

THE SEA CARRIED HER AND DOTTED THE HORIZON
AND SAME SEA WITH VISIONS OF SELF AND
SHORE AND SEAWALL LITTERED
WITH TOURISTS WHO PEOPLED THEMSELVES ALL OVER
HER SUN-BAKED SHORE RUINED WITH THEIR BODIES AND
RUINED HER WITH THEIR GARBAGE LEFT NEAR THEIR SHAPES
LEFT IN THE SAND RUINED HER WITH A MOLLUSKY CAROUSAL WITHIN HER IN THE WAVES OF
FIRST KNOWING IN THE SEA-RENTS LIVED
THUS CARRIED HER HELD HER AFFIXED
THE SEA CARRIED HER IN ITS LULL STATE IN
ITS THICK HAZE ITS DEFT GAZE THE SEA HELD
HER INJURED LIMP SELF WITH UNKEMPT HAIR
FLOATED HER IN A BED OF SALT AND WEPT
THE SEA WEPT FULLY THEN AND HEALED HER
THE YEAR SHE FIRST CAME UNTO KNOWING
THE SEA CARRIED HER SEATHUS CARRIED
HER STAGED AND STAINED HER CHAFFED AND
STRAINED FORM THIS WAS THE YEAR THE SEA
BECAME STILL AND FORMED HER
HER IRREVERANT WANT IN WAVES
THE SEA CARRIED HER

THE YEAR THE SEA CARRIED HER
a chronology in waves
mastered in its full lull state
its strained strange and
stained repeat repeat
HERSEAS
PERSEA a green green sea
a drug cartel is moving the
sea sea sea sea sea
sea sea sea sea sea sea
sea sea sea sea sea sand
sea sea sea sea sea waves
sea sea sea
BEREAVED SEAS
USA USES OCEAN AS
DUMP cartel strangles
the sea sea sea ships
garbage to under sea and
be burnt as fuel. Unfortunately, makers
only to create toxic
chemicals contaminating
food and more by the
deepest point in the sea in
the Pacific is littered with
candy wrappers and plastic bags sea shells and weird
fish sea sea sea anemone
sea sea sea sea sea sea
sea sea sea sea sea sea sea
sea sea sea shells
are changing we now see
blanched
the sea is deep
but the ocean is deeper
sea shells are changing. We now see blanched
GREAT SALT POND
NEW HARBORRare changing
we now see blanched
turtles see's a sea sea sea outstretched sea sea sea sea
a sea sea sea in a a

She seethes disasters into
Seas eases another wor(l)d
of oceans & sea
&sand & star torn O
nights of sea-lit
ASTERS illuminating
her bereaved seas
nautic strandlings O
disaster disease &
cessing to be seas
on SEAS & oceans
singing SEALING
herself seawidth
PERSEUS presses O

seaweed of gulls
just gulls no sea
just ocean or
ocean gulls
VER FISHED SEAS
SEA ODE
sea sea absentia
sea sea
CEA
ANO
OBSCURA
SANS
STEWARDS
sea sea sea
sea sea sea
sea glass wreck sea
seeing
SEASHORES
seething
sea sea sea sea
sea sea sea
sea things sea
sand sea sea
discordant
disconnected
stranded seals
sea things
sea sea sea
THE YEAR THE SEA CARRIED HER

the sea carried her
as desire
does sea
always
carried
as desire
always
deals in
her
repeat
and year
every
and fear
held her
her
fear
held her
her

sullens
suh
swol
see

SEA
STATIC
SEA
ERRATIC
SEA

SQUALLS
STASIS
SEASHORE
CENSURE
SEISURE
CAESURA
REDUX

the sea
married her
gathered her
every year
and every fear
held her
fear
and fear
held her
her
fear
and fear
held her
her
fear
held her
her

or, every swell held her
and every sea
carried her
every day ever year
without her
knowing as every fear every
seathus held and
held her a
constant rocking
every year
each sea
carried her
her every year
held every fear
seaheld

the sea
carrried her
toward the next
fear
many

THE SEA CARRIED HER

sea swell
sea erratic
with
sea
dishwater
chapped waves

the sea
married her
gathered her
every year
and every fear
held her
fear
and fear
held her
her
fear
held her
her

or, every swell held her
and every sea
carried her
every day ever year
without her
knowing as every fear every
seathus held and
held her a
constant rocking
every year
each sea
carried her
her every year
held every fear
seaheld

THE YEAR THE SEA CARRIED HER
THE SEA CARRIED HER

THE YEAR
THE SEA CARRIED HER
it carried her in repeat the sea carried itself fully every year and every she many the sea carried as her wanton desire her years
THE YEAR THE SEA CARRIED HER

THE SEA CARRIED HER
incarnate
naught
at sixes
sevens flummoxed
bamboozled
disoriented
mystified
a loss
at sea
salty and
briny
pelagic
seagoing
ocean-going
saltwater
marine
a great number
and vast
assemblage of
concourses
provocateurs
of profusion
a plethora
a mass
or main
a deep drink and salt
and salt salt
waves and waves
the deep blue
blue drink
by way of
the heart of
our vast and
edible sea