

She

came on a cloudless day.
It was warm, and the sun
shone so strongly I could
see deep into the ocean
if I would have dared to
peer over the
side of my boat.
But the depths remained hidden and dark.

She matched the sun, it seemed,
giving off her own warmth and glow.

*I wonder if She notices I'm here, on
my boat out here on the water, while She
plays in the sand and shallows.*

I dared for the first time to grab the railing,
as if it would steady me,
steady the boat which now
rocked when it had previously been
nothing but still.

Calling to her, daring to speak, I said,
“Where are you from?”

She looked up, eyes wide, as if seeing me
for the first time. But She smiled,
“From my mother’s own ocean,
where my family lives.”

I asked why She was here,
at my own empty ocean,
the one I dare not leave
my boat’s safety to
touch.

But She only smiled and shrugged,
palms up. Then asked if She could stay
here for a while.

If you wish, was my reply.

For days we stayed, me at my railing,
her in the shallows.
Every so often one would call a question
to the other,
but mostly, I would watch her as
She danced around in the sand.

She had this sort of magic with the
air, spinning them along,
weaving the winds before
letting them go.
I could feel those breezes from here,
where they upset the balance of my boat.

I found I no longer
missed the still silence.

She never lost her balance,
though She often came close.
The laugh She would let loose upon
righting herself brought a smile to my lips—
this was new.

I like this.

And I didn't realize just how much
until one day I leaned
 a little too far
 over the railing and
one of her breezes came
 a little too fast and
I tumbled
 over
 the
 railing
that was supposed to keep me safe
 and I fell
 into
 the
ocean,
finding myself alone in its depths.

Not once did I think about drowning,
only my last view of She.
Her back had been turned. And

I never asked her name.

He

was there, on a boat, floating
out there in the water.

I stepped into the shallows, the
water covering and soothing my
sand-burned feet—the walk from
my mother’s own ocean had been
long. But I found an ocean I could
maybe call my own
if its occupant is willing to share.

He didn’t move on his boat, but
I think He noticed me here.
Will He mind if I stay?
In this quiet, but not silent, place?

He seems lonely, and I wonder if He
left his family’s ocean,
wanting to escape the crowd.
Would He mind if I join him?

“Where are you from?”
It was faint, but there,
and I look up to see him. He
was looking over the railing,
at me.

My lips upturned and I waved,
giving my reply.

“Why are you here?” he asked.
I shrugged—I wasn’t sure
what drew me here, this

almost empty ocean.

But I liked it.

From then on, neither of us
spoke much. We both just existed,
and I don't think he paid much attention
to me as I spent the days
learning the land by the shore.

Slowly, slowly, I danced my way
deeper
into the
waves
little
by
little
and
the
water
seemed
to
keep
rising
higher.

But
I don't mind—
the waters were the cool that
balanced the heat of the sun.

Only one day I turned around and
He
was no longer there.
His boat,
but not He.

Where did He go?

Suddenly the air weighed upon me,
thicker than the water,
and the sun seemed to dim.

I looked up to see black

crackling clouds, moving faster
with wild winds far
beyond my control.

I've never seen clouds here before.

Was it because
He
was gone?

I was deeper in the water than I'd
ever gone before, on my tip toes to keep
my head above the water.

A sudden gust cause me to
lose my fragile balance
and

I
slipped
off the
edge of
the shallows
and into
the
deep
.

But I didn't feel fear,
I wasn't scared of drowning, of
leaving the beach. After all,
He was no longer there.

The currents grabbed me,
dragging me deeper,
towards the ocean floor
as if eager to show me
something.

Soon I reached the bottom,
the currents setting me gently upon it.

I was alone.

She

was here, at the ocean's floor,
with me.

It was in the dim and quiet,
where I'd been, all alone,
only to see a light
float towards me, where I stand
at the bottom.

It was She.

I reached forward, my hand
shaking, pulse racing.

We were closer
in the depths of the ocean
than We ever were in the sun.

I lightly touched her shoulder, and She
jerked, eyes wide,

as if seeing me for the first time.

The She smiled, lighting up the depths
brighter than the sun ever did the land,
and laughed, a sound sweeter than the
breaking waves.

I looked her in the eyes,
my She,
and said,

“Stay here?
With me?”