## MARZANNA KIELAR

1912

Memory, allegedly birth, always
 (its rocky spires

and dune-echoes); I think of us on the ferry, approaching the island. You sweeping my hair behind my ear, whispering: "I'll go to synagogue and thank Him for giving you to me"—the moment when love imparts its mortality to immortality.

The night sky slopes aside,
eastward. And where the basalt of night is thinnest,
severed by streaks of erosion, dawn rises redfleshed. There is no easy passage between light and dark.
There is fire and there is raw black sky. Desert armor of the sea. Body
of sleep
that splits along the length of the crevice, icy rust uncovered.

2.

The forest in the depths of the island, dwarfed, leafless, kneeling—when dawn strikes the horizon with a blood-shot fin. And the foal, the day, tries to rise among the shrubs, surrendering the afterbirth to the mother's tongue, and each movement gives birth to a glint of sun. I watch it pause opposite the sea—

and there is nothing that could pass, and the wind takes its wings from the foam on the rocks, and the sky is unveiled, lit, like the body after love, thrown on the shore at high tide.

Translated from the Polish by Jennifer Croft

124