

## THE FAMILY WAR

My father made meals underwater  
while the war went on. He stirred  
enormous pots of s.o.s. in the belly  
of a ship, thinking of me held upside  
down, he flipped an extra dash of salt  
into the stew as the big guns pushed  
and recoiled like a woman in labor.

There was a war, the smell of irons  
steaming in small apartments and sons  
aiming wooden rifles at each other.  
There was ma grown big bellied with me  
facing the windy sea, that double image  
of waiting, dad, a cold shuttling  
ocean throwing up stones and salt.

But you came back and blocked up all  
the windows in the house until my brother  
threw the first punch through the wall.  
Then you felt at home, coming at us  
in the darkness like a grey slug  
from the big guns ready to explode.

## THE ANT MAKES PROGRESS TOWARDS HIMSELF

If the page isn't a hole for escape, you learn  
to fill the entrance with stones and fear  
the thunder that comes rolling to the roots  
of your progress. Sometimes, isn't it always  
night, you'll carve your rest into the wall  
and yell is this enough? The same thin yell  
that told you where to dig comes back. Nothing  
matters until another tunnel breaks through yours.  
Then the shock is seeing someone with your face;  
that there's so little left of it, it's grown  
so dark, it is the blackness shining at the end.