

THE RETURN

I often dream about the ocean
and would like to write
a long ode to water, because I live
on a drought stricken flood plain
next to a sea where a baked delta
opens between glittering sandstone cliffs
& the dunes and beaches make holiday resorts
seem like colonies in outer space.
Where are the green islands? Where are
the sticky hibiscus flowers,
the paddocks full of clover and grass,
the intricate mangrove swamps
& the mud that squelches between your toes?
Instead I am covered in salt—
the same brother you forgot
whose wounds were like rumours
of the rains' failure
but who returns even so, just as the wet arrives
after weeks of dry storm lightning out to sea
& who stands in front of you
dressed in his flash city clothes
but suddenly shy, like a stranger embarrassed
by wet footprints and tears
& the sudden atmosphere of drama.