

The Spoon · *Ceci Miller*

Someone in my last dream
held out a nautilus shell and said
 The secret of your grandmother It's in here

But dreams can be explained
Before I slept I'd found a picture of a nautilus
unhoused a paunchy pink
opened painfully nude
in the Smithsonian calendar of the days of 1983

Also pictured a ceremonial spoon
with legs for a handle Its feet
are thick and round like children's feet
With the spoon standing they pose apart on tiptoe
Lying down the legs open for sex
I'd like to have a spoon like that

So the nautilus meant nothing
 Or else the shell becomes another thing
 as the spoon with wooden limbs
 becomes other than a spoon
Naked to the waist in my dream
I saw only the shell
not the hand that held it
nor any creature living inside or out

Grandmother
I don't want to share it whatever it is
Too far inside that blushing
flesh the squat chamber surrounds a hidden event
 and slowly the mouths begin to sing
 There is walking until the coals
 light a circle of faces *Selah*
Workmen the tallest mountain does not dwarf them
They are bold Their god is bold good
 Selah

Whoever finds the nautilus
keep it If it bursts open
I don't envy you

It's good to be here with a circle of friends
embedded together all accidental
for as long as it lasts
There must be others like us
Are they also watching their fire?
Our feet will burn We stop the dance

I turn the spoon in my hand
and the half-body turns
The calves are large thighs slender
The face is blank (the well of a spoon)
but when you turn it you feel the face turning
and you are ashamed