

SELF-ESTEEM

Where the ritual of submission dwells,
flat landscapes, bereft of light, will emerge,
and—arrogant—they will demand of your weakness
total recognition and endless homage.

From dawn to dusk, one had to navigate the turbulent waters of anxiety
in a ceaseless quest for perfection.
Its singular truth transcended good and evil.
Nothing else mattered; it was out of place.

I was never the strongest.
The tears that welled up during nights of helplessness
were buried beneath the dark's complicit cloak.
Silence. I had been warned. That was the grim pact.
My sorrowful toll. My unspoken levy.

Weary-eyed, the gaze in the mirror understood
that it was urgent to leave the forest
and run toward the sea.

The gods, from their watchtower, demand human devotion,
yet, when confused, they weep along the roads,
scattering their universal sorrow.

I do not buy plots of land in heaven;
I simply wish to feel the cool breeze on my skin
and breathe in deep—so very deep—the scent of salt.

“Adrift, Winter Days” (2005–2014)