

Senior Division Poetry

Anna Swanson, St. John's

In which skinny dipping temporarily fixes a voice (an excerpt)

Note: All words except title transcribed from garbage found while swimming at the Punchbowl, St. John's, NL.

You have come to speak one-on-one
with the world. It is not danger exactly,
just that your fire has become harmless.
Just that your hope tastes like aspartame
& your thirst cannot remember what it wants.
You have become an illustrated book
of hazards & antibodies & small careful passions.
Even your questions are plastic toys
that make no mark. What is it you want?

The world holds out its world-sized
palm filled with water.

Leave your bright packaging on the rock.

Make cold contact. Your face, your ribs.

Your assembled cravings

& damage. Stay under. Lose your left &

right. Lose your receipts & your

schedules & your adhesive outline.

Come back up breathless &

breathe. If that fire is harmless

it is not yours. You are alive.

These are your fine fat facts.

This is your unsweetened tongue.

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