

TIDAL WAVE

I might have sprung from the sea floor
off California or Alaska. Today,
my brother will be an earthquake.

I speak to anything afloat or on shore,
a herringbone or barefoot girl.

The earthquake reminds us how quiet.

I understand the flotsam you ignore.

A sailboat breaks on an island,
losing its clarity. I look for some fragment

of an anchor so I can tell its origin.

Oceanographers know only reef and water
and all that is vaguely Latin.

I am the true misnomer, six hours nearer
than the hoodoo light guttering behind.