

## It Took a Ferry

It took a ferry ride through cold, dark unfamiliar waters for them to see a glimmer of me  
For them to feel the deep, rich, ocean I am made of  
It's like seeing a seashell in a desert canyon and not knowing the how and the why of how it came to be there  
Not understanding the soft ridges or colors in contrast to the desolate landscape  
Now maybe they will know what an island could have possibly meant to my young, growing heart  
The rocky shore, the gusting winds, and the water that surrounds  
Why now, all grown up I will drive for hours  
To feel the salt on my lips and the wind whip my face and the sound  
That glorious thunder of the waves meeting the shore and receding like a heart beat  
Returning me to the temple of my familiar  
Maybe now they can see how my vision expands outward  
Past the periphery of the shore  
Always curious beyond the ferry dock  
Other ways of living  
Other ways of being  
Did they glimpse for a moment the spirit of island people?  
Did they see the deep lines from the chapping of cold marine air?  
Or the freckled hands of old men from endless summers emptying crab pots, like my dad had?  
Did they see the grit?  
Or the community that happens when people pull together, when water surrounds them?  
Did they pause to consider, these people were my first teachers?  
It was on an island, with a ferry riding the only vein to the outside world that gave me the courage to soar  
It was that cool, damp, foggy, majestic, emerald water place  
That gave me a heart with many chambers  
Forged iron pathways  
And room for almost everyone to fit

It was all that  
That took me jungles  
And Mayan villages  
And warm Caribbean waters  
With red clay roads  
Brown hands  
Classrooms full of so many faces that two shared one desk  
And the smell of new life  
The heaviness of death  
And now in cities  
And freeways  
And high-rises  
And concrete  
But still my nautical soul  
Looks for the sunrise every morning at dawn  
And still looks for that orange band every evening  
And seagulls glide in my mind's eye  
And in the distance sometimes the slight sound of the ferry's fog horn  
Maybe standing on the deck of the ferry  
Holding tightly to the rail  
Maybe they saw their first glimmer of me  
Maybe