7

Two Poems

Boitumelo Riet

SA Agulhas' Girl

I burn all my boats chasing after you
Mama's fear—the vast mouth I sail to
Papa's apprehensive joy
Mane's wall cracking lamentations

the way leads to the Antarctic,
I must remind them
not the whirlpools of my ancestors'
sorrows still scourging

you changed owner and surname,
from Agulhas to the lady who breathes
song for Africa

I too have been repossessed,
re-figured to smooth through
turbulence and cut imperfection

your horn rattles me
from a stupor of slaving
yesteryears

Fiery ferry,
what makes you think I'd miss your
red coloured hulls?

my curiosity cures me of
their restlessness,
about you

Mama cut the cord at the shores
leaving behind my bearings and bonds
Papa laughs like a mad scientist
to have been elemental in my making

Agulhas, your moorings enrapture me now
the harbour is not where I halt but where
our tides begin

the ice awaits me to core at its soul

I leap toward the nightmarish stories
of caressing a frozen deck with both my hands

I am salvaging all of the girl saving herself
from her uterus freezing,
growing an icy heart
& frostbite

all because I am
dreaming of a nourished tomorrow

Unfreeze my Heart, Icebreaker: A contrapuntal

Let me sing your song

to the barren field
of where I'm from

to the hollow
where my starry night schemes
do not yield green
or dancing figurines,

Injected with warm nectar
Cascading streams

of cow's milk and honey bees

Let me cry your tomorrow song

at the unploughed furrows
of my big black block

where shacks are packed
& children no longer swing

or disappear with marbles in their eyes

where fetching firewood is a trap
hatched with empty pockets

and a five bob

Let me sail away to a melody

with my heart frozen
hoisting the cold flag
of your pipe dreams,

Let my ultra voice pierce
and seep into the cracks

of all your tired streaks

Let me reach beyond
to undo the ground begetting
this dead root

Half-winged and aching,
Let me carry you in tunes
& shoulder the shrills you echo

I become restless
when the course is uncharged

So, let our polar travels trail a composition
that writhes a dream open with fresh brine
& watch the beautiful ones feast again

Let these starved dreams make their way
to the belly of my filling song

hear them rumble
hear their waves spiral
yearning to scrape for marvel

A dream that black
does not catch

the matchlight of a township's eyes

Yet wanes the youthful heart.

Let me hail the promising sound
of your horn

To the waters where
heart slates are shaped

With the sharp cut of your blade

Let us plunge into the sounds
of the singing bird, where

the wondering skies that
submerge with the waiting gravel

Untethered with fear

On board, to unshaming horizons

& slice feverishly into frozen dreams