

Betsy Warland / CLOUDNOTES

altocumulus

i prepare my heart for you
am learning to read the clouds for instruction

altocumulus considers moisture
considers sun

from the palm of a dune
i watch them form, darken, shift

this morning i awoke repeating your number
rhythmic as waves

a voice also comes:

“expect nothing”
“forget everything”

altocumulus considers moisture considers sun

in the dunes at Outlook
lying in sun's first warmth
you soon to leave

the gulls the
Saskatchewan lapping
cirrus sighed content overhead
as i held you long in nothing said

mixed skies

"I was hoping you'd call"

we talk

with shore's need for sea's endless caress

longing

rising receding rising

as the plates beneath

grind and shift

sadness relief aftershock joy

mixed skies this morning

altocumulus

a bit of blue downwind

stratocumulus undulatus

(grey water-droplet clouds)

your long silence after

"i prepare my heart for you . . ."

tears cresting through days of sea and ferries,

roads, mountains and prairies

'i prepare my heart for you'

mixed skies again

on a silver band
raven and eagle are beak to beak

sky surrounds them

altocumulus, stratocumulus,
cumulonimbus with virga
and praecipitatio reaching the ground

our first night

“I just want to lie beside you”
tentativeness so daring, touching
your breathing

staccato
until you settled nose to nose
inhaling

exhaling
our sleep-soft breath

tideline

the sea exhales two conch, an agate,
stone of starry night, stone of
sand with fossils shining black and
small triangular blood stone

(piece of my heart)

for you for

you

cirrus thoughts

i thought of you

and came

i thought of you and

came again

the thought of you

came to me

your tongue

a wild strawberry

nimbostratus

jagged slateblue nimbostratus opacus

press down

relinquish rain

forest revels green

beneath its sheltering canopy

raven calls

i answer

calls

i answer

call

answer

at the mouth of the tea-brown Tlell

the silver kiss of Hecate Strait

immature eagle feather

floats to me

nimbostratus

jagged slateblue nimbostratus opacus

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nimbostratus again

dew point

nimbostratus praecipitatio inhales trees, sea
lifts opalescent exhaling layers and layers of
clouds, mountains into Skidegate Inlet
nimbostratus praecipitatio inhales again
distance forgotten in the soft embrace of near

yet you circle within
dove after the flood

sea level

Queen Charlotte Sandspit Lanscoone Rennel Beresford Langara

six fault lines murmuring below
i tell you
you say “. . . like my life feels”
and
“be careful”

as if

i say

“that’s why it’s so powerful here”

Ring of Fire

(geologies’ integrity)

portholes of cirrus

early out on its polished curvilinearity
surface and reflective colour
in perfect sensuous harmony
(Brancusi would weep)

this close —

it is not flat but undulating
all lived and living lungs contracting,
expanding in hypnotic syncopation

this close —

the morning i awoke
everything moving
trembling for weeks

months later

i recognized you

curve and motion

nimbostratus surrenders to altocumulus to
portholes of cirrus and

stratocumulus bluesky eyes

there and

there

and there

watching
like eagles sentinel in shoreline spruce

in the abandoned village of Skedans (Raven Village)
Haida Watchman Charlie Wesley tells of
disease, missionaries burning poles
taking children

this close —
to destruction
his quiet humour

a porthole or eye
in a long-grey stormy sky

sky dark

waves wake me

rock me with increasing intensity

this close —

there is only the being in it

nothing to be done, my body's violent

trembling calms, recognizing motion sickness for fear

there are those i have harmed

i wing dream messages to them

there are those who have looked long into the face of fear

i thank them

there is you

this close —

heart is not beat

but tremor