

## STUART COOKE

yourm calm horn trumpets the end

keep sure radius  
little mouth, yourm lunar eyes  
and unhooked beak, nibbling  
yourm small head, yourm short snout  
graceful swimmers  
naked limbs like flippers  
a dark brown spot in the centre of each limb  
yellow-hued, dark, yellow-lined limbs  
the greens of the Atlantic, of the East Pacific  
the greenish fat beneath the shell  
a name is a greenish skin

about above  
compress anxieties  
their marbled people, shells  
spotted or marbled with variegated rays  
heart-shaped tears, patterns of change  
but names aren't shells, their brown or olive

drifting bulk  
smooth carapace wafting  
matt-wet, a wide  
yourm opulent home, rainbow-brown  
of yourm supreme sign  
is a bursting shell  
night climbs the day, each star

yourm equatorial line just sprouted

for an ancient planet's exiles  
crowns of seaweed  
a ship-wrecked angel weaves  
—below the bow, this liquid plane—  
tossed horizons  
sails suspend

youm dig a hole in the darkness and leave them  
after shallow water sex  
usually on beaches, night events  
youm nest in the tropics

and nesting forever  
youn migrate between feeding  
where yourm hundreds hatched  
to the precise point  
thousands of days to spawning grounds, often  
floobin, youm swim  
oh be doe be, hoodie

niggedly, moody  
push off, yourm round skirt  
gnawing, nibbling  
plomp on coral pasture

shift, off, up  
youm hang in bays, lagoons and shoals  
youm grow to graze in shallows, lush seagrass meadows  
from meat, from pelagic absence

on yourm beaches  
when long-limbed feasters build  
in nets, and so many of yourm lines end  
or yourm're sliced by propellers, drown  
and long-limbed mammals  
then extends, extends, to tiger sharks  
foxes and golden jackals  
in shorebirds and crabs, red  
the end comes in the beginning  
falling stars sizzle into glowing worms

without covering its head beneath its wing  
of a bird that sleeps in branches  
yourm poems are of dreams  
at rest, sleepy eyes

qualifying certainty, wavering above it  
yourm hundreds of kilos oolging  
an architecture of haze  
where crags become cloudform, youm see

trodden upon by monumental echoes  
over fields of sunken sunlight  
youm clap yourm small, dark wings  
soaks yourm tissues with blood  
yourm lungs explode, yourm next breath  
sail over the waves / into the troughs  
a life submerged, yourm desires

youm will live to 80

that 1%

youm die, and die, but youm that remain  
yourm little flippers scratching  
flags of crabs attack, flocks of gulls shatter the air  
months later youm hatch and scamper  
in flight amongst the mist  
and cover them, hundreds of them

fanned by the sky—these  
bask in the warm dry, yourm throat's feathers  
besides albatross

besides seals  
to drown in the sun  
youm clamber onto land

all over the Great Reef  
yourm eggs in East Java, in the Coral Sea  
yourm big kilos off Bolong Beach in Zamboanga  
with hawksbills  
to the Philippines, nesting on yourm islands  
from Mexico across the Pacific  
from Southern Russia to scatters south of Tasmania  
yourm coast's tropical, subtropical, liminal

and hum quietly into the current  
to the heaviness  
gaze up, up past the surface  
youm awake to the equatorial trail  
then, following yourm ancient thirst

find that quiet crevice in yourm deepest tessera  
don't drown in the nets!  
but youm can't hold the air when youm're stressed  
youm sleep under time for hours at a time

yourm image dissolving into cerulean  
youm gently sway into the blue  
pushing it away, pushing it away, pushing away  
opening the blue curtains with yourm soft scalpels  
yourm pricks in a vast, gloomy membrane

"Pacific Green Turtle" contains echoes of phrases from the following poems:  
"The Shadow's Keep," by John Anderson  
"After Hermann Hesse's Wandering" & "Still lifes (iii)," by Dan Disney  
"Equatorial," by Vicente Huidobro (my trans.)