

Miranda Pearson / HERE I AM, LOVER

Why am I here? It's blindingly obvious I prefer
the embroidery of wild flowers
to these dark mountains that remind me
only of Scotland.

I should have seized the chance and
stayed in the woods, watched
the silver birch unpeel, a
crazy book, its tough, dry weep, flay
of original paper, opening and —

O the decoy of romance.
You, waiting by the shore,
wanting (always). Sex
like a bright tongue, the horrible appetite
of one who is too hungry, shirt damp
from another night outdoors.

So. Here I am, lover,
with the stars. And the starfish
that cling on and on.
The arbutus is here too, fe-
line, neur-
otic. You see
the housework of tide everywhere, the way it
sweeps things up. Forgets.

Glance quizzically at the sun.
Breathe that deep
smell of salt, the
sodden initiation of air.
Meagre. I am.
Like winter sunlight.

But feel that? The thump
and sway of berth? Ooh
shudder, as the ferry, you know,
connects. See the dock's
ragged black stockings, hear the huff
and shrug of sea, its bellows
masculine, dogged.

I come back to you
and lay at your feet
an empty bowl:
Poetry.
Bric-a-brac.
These small
stitches, this
picking
and unpicking.

Try, will you, to repair
longing. My heart
weighs at least four pounds.