

布

bù

Bù

You swagger forth, arms swung up in full march, left hand behind, right flung forward offering as though in a shout here! buy this platter of brains, this tray of tripe. Never will you ever eat such fine entrails. Oblivious that your forward leg bleeds into the pole of a water carrier tall as a lamp post, buckets hanging. You stride on, nose to futurity, mindless of your Siamese twinship—Water-Carrier your anchor, just as you, like the arm of a shop sign, hang this pail-carrying stalwart sloshing a bucket over the street so that everyone passing will be entranced at your *pas s'en souvient*, your reckless nonchalance, unheedful insouciance and general inappetency for the fact that you're balanced on Water-Carrier's elbow. What's it like up there sailing over her head, full of blatancy, full of averment and unequivocal vociferation, full of flourish and fanfare and cocksure legibility with your leg that's also a water-bucket in which you dangle suspended, irresolute as a butterfly while Water-Carrier balances your unsettled hovering by growing on her other arm biceps and triceps big enough to hoist a cast-iron bathtub below your outstretched platter of lampredotto? What are those toothless whale gullets gumming your arms—that hatchet hooking your stanchion? That nose in your crotch, that leg-swallowing jaw bookended to square-head lecturing his adoration. What's this wariness that seizes your woofy significance of where you thought you were going when you were water—you floated in a watery room—you breathed with gills and heard whales opening and shutting gates in the ocean—a gently jiggling thunderous ocean—you think of Jonah and you wish that he could have been she, a water-carrier, and you wish that she had returned from the leviathan and had taught us to unravel it so that it would never again swallow us, and we would stand on our own ground.

Note: Bù is the Chinese character for *cloth*.

海
hǎi

Hǎi

A cat sidles cornerwise into the room, her whiskers knobbed like leg bones, her eyes footprints in a Halloween sheet to see themselves in mirrors floating on the night. Oh mirror mirror unfairest of them all, my tongue's caught in a mouth trap. I'll claw this bedsheet, shred it to naughts and crosses. Shred it to hopscotch. Let's see how flimsy I can make this dogged whitewash where they do their doggy roll-on-the-backery and piss-on-the-wallery. Let's see how far I can prick it, see how it sharpens my pricks up their ears. Let's make it a pricknic of pricktitude. Mirror mirror, who's the prickliest? Who's the best teacher with periculum for the prixiest cataprixses? I'll look in the prictionary. Get some juxtaprickaments. Cat on a mat. Mat in the night. Night beneath snow. Snow seeming right. Right angled wrong. Wrong facing self. Self as a snake. Snake on a shelf. Shelf in the sky. Sky under sheet. Sheet over cat. Sheets to the wind. Shoed to a coat. Shut to the coot. Cut by the shirt. Shoot for the kite. Hopscotch leg-bones, grid-eyed flap and tatter these looking words. This spooking glass. This scratchmark for sea saw flag natter nipped in nine-tail. Turn again Whittington thrice Lord Mayor of London. Your pussy in boots has stolen your clothes and all the king's rats and all the king's men can't put pussy together again.

Note: Hǎi is the Chinese character for *sea*.