

John Marshall / SIX POEMS

I was doing the dead-man's

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float

 waiting like I'd been told
where & who I am

I had to muscle my way thru
I have paced out this rough perimeter

 & I do not mean to
suffocate in air

In High Water

slash fire off
Sechelt

part red sky,
red rising tide

all the possible
blues

a backwash,
sunset

& thru the channel
a moon

so high

the words

burn out

Lighthouse

half circles, the ocean
the trees

looking out
for stars, the specific
wrecks, of one

coast

& all the names

we gave

to ships

Meteor Shower, August 1976

the image the trailing
after-image

pointing out at the
dead&gone

the collapsed

did you catch
that

time

gradually

we are given to
understand

Jeune Landing

is there a home
town what were all
the float camps,
lives at the mouth
of rivers what if you
fell in, the one armed
cook to pull you out
from under what if it's
a woman's voice claims
you & the magic is coming
from the green &
blue books what if it
was the inland waters
the tides, rise &
fall rocked you what if
it's the little loud planes
every few months, one inlet
another

Wages

camp, community of all
nationalities the community of
speech, to be
 ourselves
 reaching out of the names
to be found in
an uncorrected present, a sense
 of us, breathing the
preserved & instant voice