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## The Stone Letters: As I Caught Myself Slipping (Seacliff to the Sea)

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## THE STONE LETTERS

### AS I CAUGHT MYSELF SLIPPING (SEACLIFF TO THE SEA)

To Pygmalion, Master Sculptor, Court of Catherine:

If there the studio fire should blue  
up the marble like a slant of weather  
your chisel passes through—  
the dust, bits of porphyry, early air  
fogging the gold, a furred mallet for a softer. . .  
That you might press an iris  
into a map of Siberian rainfall, some flush  
worthy of spearing a holiday. Some register.  
That you may arrange the remains  
of last night's delicacy in the freshened snow.

Nightly, bangingly, moths into the hanging pans' light.  
Am the gifted mimic, stalled above  
seahorses, their beds of finecrush ice.  
My blank palms leave such glassy distaste!  
If shells should feel themselves interior,  
that wine-dark, that glit-glittery—  
if seasalt should flour the body's case,  
hands roused, the eyes windlashed, tinned—  
what have you seen, who keeps you? Still bell  
in custody to the velvet rope little noted  
by a distant boudoir. Did it stir? Are you summoned?  
That I do not simply die (what see you), that I  
do not slip (her high rooms),  
that I do not (the edge of my inwardness),  
that I—

some pharmaceutical tea, a seagaze.  
Soon after, noon devolves.