

Oyster Dreaming

In the depth of winter, I found in me an oyster of incantations
Spewing brine, clouding my head with thoughts of you and the sea
In the summertime, when gulls at the surface of the water divulge the blitz of fish beneath.
Silver strikes of tail and fin and whisker.

I am too easily bewitched by sandy sheets and sandy bags.
I dream of opening the front door in the morning to dump yesterday's sand on the step
To be picked up by the wind like the milkman and replenished back in the bay.

I'm brought back to hot red skin, the cold touch of a drink to your lips, and squinted eyes, tired
from the sun.

The white flesh of scallops dipped in butter, pale yellow corn, and tomatoes from our yard.

The sound of a crushed white shell path under foot.

Champagne island, bikes with baskets, hydrangeas bursting on Second Avenue.

The oyster keeps clouding my head with all of this, and the way you looked at me when I said I
was leaving – a dubious look that anchored me to the floor of your sandy basin.

I am under its spell until the smack of cold wind wakes me, and the oyster is picked up, heavy
handed, ripped open and shucked, tearing belly from shell.

- M. Ross