

Edward Bruce Bynum

Standing Before the Sea After Jogging

“Consume my heart away; sick with desire
 And fastened to a dying animal
 It knows not what it is; and gather me
 Into the artifice of eternity.”

“Sailing To Byzantium,” W.B. Yeats

I know the orgy of stones here
 On this isle and inlet ill with birds.
 The gulls watch over a dark Sabbath.

This summer-drunk weather
 Multiplies umbrellas and children, mussels and havoc,
 Young nuns escaping from the convent up river.

They’ve come to wash themselves in the water,
 Flushed and full
 Like Spring antelope,

Ears listening in the wind for crocodiles, fierce cats,
 The wilderbeasts of sexual privateers.
 Off shore clouds, animal shaped and religious,

Bash into the air. Blooming and bending,
 Stretching the sinew of space and time,
 They extend themselves out over reefs and whitecaps,

Nude bathers, sinners without names,
 Expiring salt and wisdom in a dead whale’s eye.
 I hear my heartbeat in the thin sky,