Divers

Joanna Newsom

The diver is my love
And I am his, if I am not deceived
Who takes one breath above for every hour below the seaWho gave to me a jewel
Worth twice this woman's life, though it cost her less
Than laying at low tide to see her true love phosphoresceAnd in an infinite regress
Tell me why is the pain of birth
Lighter borne than the pain of death?
I can't claim that I loved you first
But I loved you bestI know we must abide
Each by the rules that bind us here:
The divers and the sailors and the women on the pierAnd how do you choose your form?
How do you choose your name? How do you choose your life?
How do you choose the time you must exhale and kick and rise?And in an infinite capsize
Like a boat tearing down the coast
Double hulls bearing double masts
I don't know if you loved me most
But you loved me lastRecall the word you gave
To count your way across the depths of this arid world
Where you will yoke the waves that lay a bed of shining pearlsI dream it every night
The ringing of the pail, the motes of sand dislodged, the shucking, quick and bright
The twinned and cast off shells reveal a single heart of whiteAnd in an infinite backslide
Ancient boulders sink past the west
Like a sword at the bearer's fall
I can't claim that I knew you best
But did you know me at all?A woman is alive, a woman is alive
You do not take her for a siren
An anchor on a stone, alone, unfaceted and fineAnd never will I wed
I'll hunt the pearl of death to the bottom of my life
And ever hold my breath 'til I may be the diver's wifeSee how the infinite divides
And the divers are not to blame
For the rift spanning distant shores
You don't know my name
But I know yours

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