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Accidental Sea

Maureen Alsop

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Alsop: Accidental Sea

ACCIDENTAL SEA

Maureen Alsop

The sea was not an accident
but a silk red dahlia hidden
in the curio-cabinet, a dusty
boutonnière which lurked under a shrunken
ship inside a bottle.

When T. said he loved me
every teacup in the house grew
stained & suffered a chip, the asphalt rippled
like some kind of water. It lashed
at the hedges. And I grew hungry. Desire teetered
in and out of the white-lit house like flies.

I measure myself against every
wreckage. The courtyard

flutters with light; the trees a dappled
crisis of wind. Past the glamorous town, birds
die off and by midsummer a small vineyard
dries into thistle, moss, a stubble of weeds
and a mound of sand. No,

the sea was not an accident, but convolutions
in the rubble coursed against a heaving tide & the eyes
rimmed in drunkenness appeared larger, bluer.