

MALIBU

TONY WHEDON

For Joss Whedon

I stayed that month with a cousin who wrote
for television. A big yellow house with
a guard dog that never stopped barking.
It's the blue I remember, an oil-slick blue
& its darkening shadow, on the quasi-horizon;
I was done with endless suffering: I'd
played so many years my rotator cuff
refused to heal. But I loved looking down
across a rooftop of palms to the swimmers
diving off the jetty. Success was a dying
cloud drifting east, resisting the gravity
& light that tether us to earth. I'd lived
in my cousin's shadow so many years
I wanted part of the action – a TV musical,
a permanent gig in a Late Night band.
Evening stars give way to a midnight moon.
Meanwhile, the dog whose name I forget
won't stop barking. I've locked out
my cousin, I hear him knocking at the door.