

NO LAND

**STEPHEN
MASSIMILLA**

after Dean Young

But bright wings
hung above like some dietary angel's notion
of calories; they could electrify the sky somewhere,
a high-convection season.

Meanwhile, the lighthouse seemed squat as a cream pie.
A diver I recognized flipped ahead,
neglecting me for other fresh snappers.

We had brushed our teeth together. In the mirror—
a smirk, a nod from you,
a casual sign of *agita* or hunger?
Sometimes, every silence is a hairpin.

Manta rays stopped the currents,
trailing sizzling barbs
while I scanned
through waves of skate wings

for a layer of butter
among the neon radish colors
and waved at a girl on a balcony

who seemed trapped but comparatively happy.

How outlandish that people exist.

It's as if a heron trembles,

our scuba tanks sending champagne bubble clouds

up to where feathers slice a salt-skin of water. Tropes drawn

like chains across our chests, capable

of the awful things we know they're supposed

to be. Something of a famished life follows.

Someone surely chose this strain:

someone who wrested this last resort

from the ocean

to help us find our way here and bake.