

like other things we know

At times –

Death approaches capriciously

to display one of its many moods or genders.

As a reminder of the tenuous envelope of the vehicle

and the relevance of things,

this Benevolence stood up suddenly out of the west,

like a giant Tesla nerve, coiled black upon the sea's horizon.

But, before this, there had been the sticky thing with the heat

combed through the air,

then clasped together in a pall for all living things –

Not to dare go on.

Fetid island heat, with no manners,

which swells inside a couple's reason splitting the meaning of intention

obscuring the optics of the simplest change.

Precisely because one miscalculates the subtle,

is how a sullen shape obscures its growth of stature

and dares improper salutations

impels improvised reversals.

And after that, fleeing the wind wall pressure

the crazed dash through the dunes fence blocking,

doubling back through thorns,

Respect the swooping gull's primordial will,

to stab its beak into human flesh

for the sake of her embryo.

She cries testimony to the imperative.

Discern yet – how well this intense green and brittle salt-sand

reflect the shifting North Sea light

admit the magic of impending temper.

See the man and woman on the beach

their little folly has forced them back along

the western finger of this thin sand arm,

Whether they are already woven one in their hearts is of no matter, now

each is in desperate flight

from or to their awesome reckoning.

What separates a man and a woman,

or struggles in two rather than one

riddles in mystic deeper than this tongue

or simply is – as a declaration of stance on a flat *Watt* beach, in storm.

Picture these strict, twin antennae
bowed forward into the ripping confusion
backs lashed with ice

The thrust of their reverence
a vulnerability requesting blessing –
Is it shear velocity that demands them so,
or the ebbing of time's embrace held forth?

Friction in independence seeks the distinctive point
lightning's electricity desires similar telepathy

Witness right – flash!
a steel ship run-a-ground
quick decision – shelter?
or the chapel's final toll?

Witness left – flash!
is that silhouette the staff that marks the secret of the dune's return?

Separating *Watt* from Sea,
shallow from depth,
or perhaps this moment from infinite.

Nerves sear with frightful chiaroscuro,
understand it, as one of those precious moments
of unquestioned clarity –

Where perception shifts,
spreads open its taut construction
and then, seduced by the fabric's fluidity
reveals its hidden hem.

A sudden hair of lighting thick on the beach
with braided strands haloed so close about the couple
Their breach, in testament, stands erect
in one fibrous union –

Now!
instant white gold grace
greet it – receive it, embrace it –
honor and obey –

Seize it!

As defenseless calm slips its seed inside
craving a womb for its history,
whether this be the last or just another

Wonder, what is or what cannot be
and should it be any different?

The drench of Regal histrionics
shook its fancy spent

This affirmation's alchemy passes into rain
Rumbling solitary these two, in some essential way.

The tide pauses, as the *priel**,
who snakes its will across the *Watt*
turns about and like other things we know –
Comes and goes.

© John Sturgeon, 1994

- experiences from Juist – an island of the *Ostfriesische* chain, just off the German, North Sea coast in the Wadden Sea – *das Wattenmeer*, July 4, 1994
- *priel* (German – for a narrow tideway or channel of water in the North Sea mud flats, or *Watt*)