

SCOTT CAIRNS

My wife jumps crazy

My wife jumps crazy into bed, still wet
and shaking from the shower.
In a very little while
she'll be warm enough to dress, dry enough
to move through a cold room. But now,
she is cold and shaking, eager
for the warmth of arms and legs together,
the warmth of close breath.
And I am glad for cold mornings, glad for the simple
shock of waking, and for the occasional gift
of a cold and shaking woman getting warm.

You Say Kalaloch

You say it, *Kalaloch*, and the word
holds your tongue like a lover. You know
the chafe of sand, the rough touch
of south wind. Whole years
would discover you still wandering this beach,
a woman in worn clothing, only a little mad.
*Was it here I found the raven, here
the swollen dog?*
The tiny black snails
are good to eat; you can boil them
in a coffee pot, pluck them steaming
from their shells, taste the sea
rising in the meat.
You know this place, have grown
familiar with its taste, its salt
smell. You have brushed its sand
from your wet body, rubbed sand
from your brown skin. Even as you
turn away you carry *Kalaloch* in your hair.