

## THE REEF

barefoot we pick a way  
cautiously upon the reef

the children run and call  
feet flashing pale-soled  
skin dark against the sun's  
low slant into the sea

fish glint silver between  
agile hands buffeted by  
tropical heat we dangle fingers  
in breeze-shimmied pools

an anemone retracts  
clustering tight red

your hair unleashed tumbles auburn  
frightening the children  
"witch!" they cry scattering

across the reef their blunted feet  
bloodless on coral our minds  
brittle shards of unspoken need  
in the languid air unwary flesh  
could easily be cut