



Morgan Elizabeth Liphart

I arrived on a boat without sails

no rudder. Sitting in the belly of it. I had been waiting.
On unbended knee, on bended one. My fists pounding cedar.
My voice carrying. My hope fed to those tiger sharks. These hands
stretching towards a dead horizon. I didn't even have stars.
This is it. This is it.

I arrived anyways.

To the new land, unspoiled. Unsplit.
My bow moaning its own prayer into the shoreline's soil.
Wild apples falling like drums. The sky waving to me,
then, holding my hand. I didn't know, but it had known.
Where I was meant for. How it must carry the miracle of me,
saltwater wet and shivering, screaming over water. To where I had
to be.
There is lilac here like candy. A sweetness in the wind itself.
I think the crickets already know me by name. They don't stop
calling it.
I wonder if they've always known it, passed down from their
mothers.
An old woman, thick and strong as the rhubarb around her,
nibbles sweet geranium, separates raspberry from hull.
She doesn't tell me her secrets, but she shows me, leaf by leaf.
How the earth will hold you if you just let it.
How the sheep are left to wander but always find the light of home
in time for breakfast. How the butterhead lettuce can grow large
enough
to curl your body up to lay in its creases. And sometimes you do.
How the glint off the sea aster can predict the coming weather.
What else is there to learn in this life other than the language of
flowers?
At night I sleep alone, unbothered, in a cottage swallowed by ivy.
What could be better than this place? A land that recognized me
before I did.
An earth that has fought to keep me. A life big enough to build a
home.

On nature survival shows, they do not thank their mothers

Talk only of their fathers. How can they not see it, with their faces angled up to the sky, their elbows sunk into the good dirt?
This rich earth of sweetness, of mushrooms, of fiddle ferns.
The fish eye sucked through the lips. The heart of the lonely hare.
Tender-grown moss beneath them as a bed.
All sum to something larger than a man with a bow,
being given more than he's earned.
Every time he uses the word *harvest* to take a life,
or calls the beaver slung over his shoulder *it*,
he loses three years off his own. How does he not know?
In the taking, he is taken, just the same.
I've seen a man make a lamp out of a mushroom.
I haven't seen a man lay down on a cliff near the sea and cry
for the gifts of life he's been given.
The heart is a wild thing. And this island is a mother,
where the sun found his face regardless,
where he was held, automatically, always,
he never even had to ask.

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Morgan Liphart's work has appeared in anthologies and journals across the US, Canada, Italy, Sweden, Japan, England, and Scotland, such as Oxford University Press' *Literary Imagination*, *Poetry Scotland*, and *The Asahi Shimbun*. Her first chapbook, *Barefoot and Running*, was a finalist for the Colorado Book Award. She is the host of the writing podcast, *The Quiet Alchemist*, and the teacher of Poetry Masterclass: Writing and Publishing Powerful Poetry in Journals and Magazines.

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