

If heaven is no genuine consolation, then life

The waves pulse toward the shore  
the fisherman with his back to the water  
setting his lures, the dogs chasing balls  
and the small groups of twos and threes  
walking toward the Golden Gate.

And in the parking lot at Baker Beach, the tourists stop  
to take quick pictures. They leave  
their car doors open.

I stand still. And when I see the first  
dolphin, I feel the tears begin to rise  
picture your ashes streaming away  
from the boat, sinking  
like that other day  
the dolphins came.

I've never understood what makes the water  
blue or green, and today it is both  
the blue calm and deep  
the green like a storm—

All the things I've tried to drown  
just below the surface. I've never wanted  
to be the ocean more, to just swallow the unseen.

But then the pelicans rise from their low formation  
and I notice the sun is burning off the morning fog.  
There is a moment when I feel the ocean's pull  
and yet I trust that the wind is enough—  
that now, despite love or loss,  
wonder  
is my truest emotion.  
I imagine that as the sun warms my feathers, I will fly.