

## II

Tonight, in the narrow logjam of my cabin,  
while crash ice loudly scours the hull  
and the moon hangs like a faint sword overhead,  
my mind roams the cliffs riddled by prions.

Though I am weak as a breaking wave  
at times, more awkward than a landing albatross,  
and fumblingly ignorant of nature's ways,  
my heart goes birding in all love's countries,  
takes the rock paths edged with shale,  
will climb up to far fields if need be,  
because one never knows in what grotto  
and beneath which rock lies *desolata*.

But sometimes, in my eagerness  
to discover life's hidden marvels,  
I reach into the tight awkward places  
a man keeps to himself, and find there,  
huddled under a ledge, armored by the earth,  
a brilliant flutter of wings, a flash of beak.

Tugging it gently from its den, in tenderness  
and in passion, I forget that it must be held  
like the feathered mystery it is, without crush or panic,  
loose enough that it can breathe deep,  
flex its huge wings, and fly free if it wants,  
but snug enough that it will wish to stay.