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Uma

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Uses Of Enchantment

It is therefore that I would have woman lay aside all thought such as she habitually cherishes, of being taught and led by men. I would have her, like the Indian girl, dedicate herself to the sun.

—Margaret Fuller, 1845

I’m pulling weeds
in the Woodmont beach
house garden,
while in Puget Sound,
beyond the chaos of roses and peas,
sunset ignites
bonfires underwater.
The flames spread.
The ballad of the dead
is sung beneath the surface in slow sync with anemones,
saturated by the deep pull of a story that’s truer than zoology,
but seems strange as a speaking salmon,
or a seal with a scarlet pelt.
The story explains that though dusk will always rekindle under Puget Sound,
my grandmother will never swim up from under death clenching her golden teeth.
All that’s left is a handful of enchanted seeds that she packed into the calcium spines of my mother and me, that force us upward like stalks from beans driven crazy in love with the sun.