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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.