

TWO POEMS BY JOHN BARTON

Strait of Juan de Fuca

The sea is cedar rust.

I root myself down
into the cliffs,
into a twisting spray

of gorse sticky
with dew.

Blind shards

of sun
break like an egg

over the mountains,
soften into fire-gold

crescents that melt
into shore.

I root myself down,

permit night
to drift up from the sea
like kelp,
stretch itself out.

Some days
I walk out to these cliffs,
sit down,

let the sun strain

through my thoughts
like dampness through cloth;

someday I will join them,
wrap myself in them,

walk out to sea.

Red Cedar

How I wish the years
could be like this

reaching upward

great roots anchored
unwavered
by notions of sky

I need such days

all limbs at ease
in the wind's sway

like wings