

Buckroe, After the Season, 1942

By Virginia Hamilton Adair

Past the fourth cloverleaf, by dwindling roads
At last we came into the unleashed wind;
The Chesapeake rose to meet us at a dead end
Beyond the carnival wheels and gingerbread.

Forsaken by summer, the wharf. The oil-green waves
Flung yellow foam and sucked at disheveled sand.
Small fish stank in the sun, and nervous droves
Of cloud hastened their shadows over bay and land.

Beyond the NO DUMPING sign in its surf of cans
And the rotting boat with nettles to the rails,
The horse dung garlanded with jewelwing flies
And papers blown like a fleet of shipless sails,

We pushed into an overworld of wind and light
Where sky unfettered ran wild from earth to noon,
And the tethered heart broke loose and rose like a kite
From sands that borrowed diamonds from the sun.

We were empty and pure as shells that air-drenched hour,
Heedless as waves that swell at the shore and fall,
Pliant as sea-grass, the rapt inheritors
Of a land without memory, where tide erases all.

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