

Learning to swim

By Bob Hicok

At forty-eight, to be given water,
which is most of the world, given life
in water, which is most of me, given ease,

which is most of what I lack, here, where walls
don't part to my hands, is to be born
as of three weeks ago. Taking nothing

from you, mother, or you, sky, or you,
mountain, that you wouldn't take
if offered by the sea, any sea, or river,

any river, or the pool, beside which
a woman sits who would save me
if I needed saving, in a red suit, as if flame

is the color of emergency, as I do,
need saving, from solid things,
most of all, their dissolve.

Source: *Poetry* (July 2009)