

The Calm

By Sean O'Brien

At the mouth of the river,
Moon, stars, an Arctic calm,
The twin lights at the end of the piers
Revolving with the smoothness
We expect of supernatural machinery.

Seen from down here on the beach
The harbored ocean slowly tilts,
Like a mirror discreetly manhandled
By night from the giant room
It was supposed to occupy forever.

The mind says *now*, but the stars
On their angelic gimbals roll
And fade, a tide of constellations
Breaking nowhere, every night
About this time. Strike up the band.

In the tumbledown bar, the singer
Has fallen from stardom and grace,
But though her interests nowadays
Are wholly secular, she can
Still refer back to the angels,

And knowing that song, we share
A moment with the saved before
We leave to make the crossing.
No captain, no ferry, but
Cross we shall, believe you me.

Source: *Poetry* (January 2018)