

Edge

Marilynn Rashid

1992

(written on the 500th anniversary of the European “discovery” of the Americas)
Oh that he had fallen off the edge of the world.
Oh that there had been an edge to fall off,
an edge the natives knew and revered
sharp and well-defined
a cutting edge
the edge the fearful sailors dreamed of
a never-ending point of no return.

.
It would have been the limit of love’s tolerance
a simple lucid answer to the threatened conquest of our souls,
all our souls.

It would have marked the end of science
and the dawn of knowledge,
the cartographer’s demise, the witch’s boon.

.
Imagine it!
He and his prisoner-sailors falling fast,
three ships filled not with gods but fools
and the prisoners of fools,
three ships dropping in the fiercely gushing waters
of the grandest waterfall of all time,
three stones, three specks,
gone in a flash, lost to the history of stars,
the memory of galaxies.

.
And if others had followed never to return
and the reality of old-world nightmares finally fathomed
perhaps the rest before they embarked or dreamed of embarking
would fall, too, back on each other,
deep into themselves, discovering paths in hand and heart,
jolting them hard back into their worlds,
left to explore the paradise there.

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Fifth Estate #340, Autumn 1992

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