

She stands beyond this gulf of greedy pilgrims  
washed in alien voices. Born not of the sea,  
as her sister rising on wave and cockle shell,  
but of blue air, harbingered by winds.  
Lightly on the earth she rests. Her pale  
feet hardly test the verdant grass or cast  
a shadow on the scattered petals.

Sprung from dark pigment and boar brush,  
like blossoms conjured from winter wood,  
her eyes ask only what we seek  
across the chattering crowds, on the gallery's  
far shore. All the while we try to read  
what we desire in those pale eyes. They meet  
the stranger's gaze unabashed, as they met  
the painter's years ago.

Not beauty, nor some grand ideal scratched  
on vellum scrolls stored in palatial cupboards.  
Not truth. It isn't there. And yet we won't resign  
our hunger to articulate what we can  
only taste in lucid air. She shows us  
what our longing can not name. She is just  
that which we can never say.