

Cassie Premo Steele

Walking on the Backs of Whales

The night you were born I dreamt
I saw whales in the ocean, large humps
of backs rising out of the sea, grey
like your hands, and lingering there,
in the air, skin full of urchins and
moss. The sight was wondrous, like
your eyes, the first time you looked
at us, into the blue of me, the hazel
of your father, your gaze a miraculous
mix of us both. And when I was done,
with the whales and your birthing,
I began to walk back to the land,
and the water was shallow, the pain
was not bad, I was still amazed
at what I had seen, and I realized
I'd been walking on the backs of whales
the whole time. What I'd taken for earth
was the wet of their bodies, hovering firm
beneath the surface of water, providing
a path over ocean, allowing me to meet you
half way, between that world and this,
taking me gently back home to the shore
where I never before had been.