

PIMONE TRIPLETT

The Rumour of Myth

(Thetis on Achilles, the son)

Starts in estuary

 whelm and whirl of rock-skin,
 sea-swell, the hove called salt.

 I loved

the hero-to-be,

 his life first arrowed unto me,

 scudding, spared, still
 unconscious.

 No

 he and she to wash

 away yet, my

inhale planked to his ex—.

 Plus our everywhere wet
 trough

 in the tidal

 waves repeating

 over and over.

Given, milky teats, realm of belly,
given, his body my body by faith.

Which to keep him I'd

 cozen, always,

guarding every

waterway I owned.

See hand, heart, heel

where I dipped him, to save.

See the would-be bargain,

back ridge of epic,

hovering in half-truths as if I really could

unwick what was to come.

In the end when they took him

the spell of the world sang

name, rank, date

of birth, your mother's

maiden, your father's post.

Still, I said *no hands*

out the window, boy,

I said *no swimming*

at the water's edge.

Sand's oozy blank's where they've got oblivion, boy,

so listen you get back here right now.

Nothing worked. He wanted all the wrong

toys, tanker's prow,

the true-edged sword, a golden set of spears.

And when it came to the armor, god-hammered, bronze

through the beam,

well, I never begged. Another

exoskeleton, extra

skull. Though I'd made him perfect, zodiac'd

to last.

Meanwhile, time being,
on that outline-horizon,
you could see empire

serrated at the edges: junk boats,
great ships,
the soldiers waving, even the geese
defined in V's.

Soon each new sight needed.
And Fame, that bitch, stuck
like a splinter inside him,
cutting the flesh

in whispers, rumoring,
you can win, you can win.
Wood hewn like a beast at the door.