

Alfred Nicol

The Inheritance

We return to the ocean
because we have grown used to it.
It is a field of long grass
we do not cut and bale,
a field we've let go wild.
If there are great winds
we've stood up to the wind before.
Sand
isn't anything new.
And the expanse—
this way of leaping forward
and having to draw back
is a commonplace.
Awkward in greeting others,
we remember
falling over ourselves in welcome,
and with nothing to say.
Here we look away from one another,
at ease.
Shoes are set aside
and our shadows stretch out beneath us.
There is an abundance
we've had no hand in bringing up.
We come empty-handed,
and what shells we take up, rocks,
we admire and set down.