

Ken Meisel

The Water's Variation w/ Bird Feathers in it # 2

The water's sheen – blue lead,
manganese, cobalt –
coupled with

the rising vapor, so airy, part-frothed,
part frayed and dense
with chiaroscuro

and soft blending,
and the blue of the sky
and the surf tide,

mixing gold and jade splinters
into a surface palette together,
imparts a variation

so that the eyes,
so puzzled at what to look at,
dart left to right to find it,

this coloration
so very like a prismatic butterfly
as it erupts

across the jagged ridges
of the chopped and chiseled waves
that roll on

and recklessly drop
into the harsh bedlam
of a vagrant tumult

way out, in the soft outlier swells.
We gather at the boat rails,
mesmerized, looking out.

Isn't all beauty like this?
One variation, blending
within another –

so that all we witness
must be seen by one eye
and then

the other eye, complete?
The repeated form or
pattern to it –

variation – being the one clean motif
we all must abide,
or else one eye

loses forever the other eye's
witness to what? variety?
The one eye –

so calculating for the obvious –
while the other eye,
a sleuth, goes roaming

for the one lost, immediate white object
dissolving; look at it: this lovely gull's feather
we see floating

out there beyond us –
like a bridal tulle or a veil
into blue.

And the sea gulls, riding the wind,
hypnotize themselves
atop the blue foamed

roller coaster crest of the waves
that rise and fall
into sunset's funeral pyre

so that when we gaze out into it,
this sundown,
we no longer see

inside the golden kingdom of it
just this one single feather –
but *many, many feathers*:

whole groupings of bird feathers
bouncing in the waves
in a design variation

of gull and other bird feathers
floating aimless and different,
like a curated array.

And isn't variation just a seeing
with multiple eyes?
Aren't we already

prepped to see –
with both our eyes
working as witness –

all this diverse distinction
gone scattershot,
into splendor?

And isn't that
how we all
mature,

into a world made
of pure
awe?