

Sharpening a Point

Malaika Kegode

from above,
stingrays gliding underwater
look like ravens, free falling
islands of blackness,
dreamlike inkblots
drifting on the tide

and as we dream,
we wake up to ourselves.
some fearful honesty
bubbles and churns
in our stillness.

those moments leave us
waterlogged, soaked through
with imagined memory
that spills over lines.

we'd studied him in school.
wrote out connotations, plot
synopses, summations and
took turns reading fragments
aloud, boys affecting accents
to make the class laugh,
girls texting absently
under tables.

I'd already read it twice through,
lingered on the wording
of Simon's swollen tongue, the
gifts for the darkness. there had
been familiarity in its particular tide,
how shadow would drip and foam
until everything was tinted –
a Caligari-skewed mirror of dreams
kept tightly under covers.

sleep always comes lapping again,
a schism patched up –
the reality of fiction
like ravens underwater
like stingrays in the sky
bring a heavy comfort.

when
the sea is just a puddle,
and all you have is a paper boat
but you can write everything down
then those words keep you afloat.

his dreams are now an inheritance
turning over and over in the current
sharpening a point against
a darkness which sits,
soaking in our hands.