A Pious Widow

On the dune she leans
Black hem in her hands
Granite roofs behind her
Salt burns both her palms
Her husband went under
Beyond the baiting foam
Now the wind knows her name
And the path to her home

She spits at the water
Then lifts up her face
Old grief in her throat
Like a stone in the place

Sea, give him back
Sea, give him back
You took my man
And left me that
Sea, give him back
Sea, give him back
If he won't return
Then swallow that

Her dress turns inside out
And snaps in the gale
She catches the skirt
With a shaking, white knuckle
Muttering old words
Dust on her tongue
Widow's stitched memory
Frayed and undone

She steps through the spray
Like she steps through a tomb
Curses in the dusk
Then she calls through the gloom

Sea, give him back
Sea, give him back
You took my man
And left me that
Sea, give him back
Sea, give him back
If he won't return
Then swallow that

Sky, hear this prayer
Hang it on the cloud
If you won't send him home
Then break open now

One small sign
One lamp in the dark
One warm hand
One beating heart

Sea, give him back
Sea, give him back
You took my man
And left me that
Sea, give him back
Sea, give him back
If he won't return
Then swallow that
Sea, give him back
Sea, give him back
I’m still here
Still asking that

Chantell Gasp