

*Deserter*

A one-night stand, perhaps, but such  
rousing from the mineral dead  
can sweep you off your feet, rampant  
waves from nowhere, their moonless pitch  
monumentally desolate.

How many deaths can a dead sea die?  
Thirst had never been an issue,  
living with the salt itch, serenely.  
But something cracks if what flows in  
is strangled to a trickle. Cupped  
in the desert a soul's parameters  
start to shrink. Another few weeks  
would have brought quick rains,  
an ecstasy of wilderness flowers  
but you couldn't wait. You tore  
off your khaki shirt, seized your snare-  
drum by the shoulder strap and running  
to the water's edge flung it against  
the sky, where it glints turning  
over and over in my mind.

*Dead Sea, 2003*