

the mountains are in view
golden spiked and angled clean
far, far below my tiny window in the sky
how can we read and yawn up here?
eating our little packaged pretzels
sleeping with eye-masks on to mute the shock of gold
reflecting from the peaks
instead of gasping these full ninety minutes
in unbridled awe
of the miracles of sight
and flight
and the desperate beauty above and below

we glide slow beneath that heavy painted stripe
chinook cloud arching wide
a lover's outstretched arms
our carriage but a speck of tin
inside the lungs of god

again I leave my prairie behind
I say, "my" prairie
because I've fallen head-over-heels
too many times to count
for one canola field or other
boundless smiling yellow that sustains me through the months of snow
tugging on warm memories
each time I depart

but I feel part-keeper of the ocean I'm heading for, too
one drop must be allotted mine, at least,
I feel it so deeply inside my salted blood
liquid ancestor
like a great-grandmother with her ancient healing recipes
mysterious herbs passed down through generations
so my ocean mother seems to be herself a shimmering potion
with some mystic knowledge of my insides
and how to make them whole again
and again
each time I return to her
heart gaping

I look down to where the forests are
only black smudges
and feel the surge of silent awe again
there is a gladness growing in me
I have not heard from in years
a little fern
bright green and new
and strong
from way up here I feel
my little fern heart
reaching past the fumbling clouds
to the sides of those mountains
the forests low and between

where everything is being accomplished
in perfect time
every task of living full
and even though my feet are so high above the ground
even though I'm in between
I feel connected to where I've been and where I'm going all at once
and rooted
glad fern heart
into the shining earth