

[Beth Marzoni: "Anecdotes of the Border Crossing" \[1\]](#)

February 18, 2014 [Honoring Rukeyser](#) [2]

## **Anecdote of the Border Crossing**

Impossible, but somehow light still  
floods these narrowing days:

wrought iron & swollen with bells.  
What city isn't a record of our disasters?

Wherever the river touched & receded  
someone marked its height: mid-calf,

a man's waist. Imagine  
the city not domed. Not brick

repeating beautiful & beautiful, but drowning  
or sieged, seized... Imagine creak of wood

underfoot like rotting. Or fruit—  
their waxy rinds come off whole & accumulate

under stands of stacked crates swept up mornings pass.  
Look: chestnuts come wrapped in days-old news

& each hour unfolds more distance between us.  
Say any thing & feel the word expand

your throat, float over the tongue.  
Now imagine that water rushing in.



## Anecdote of the Border Crossing

Here fishing boats & here the sea.  
Here sheets like sails between tile roofs,

like consolation, blur of shoreline. Always  
at some edge—where we search,

ourselves barely legible. Or  
that dust. Here everywhere.

Here even in our mouths.  
Here not burying now,

not like it did: ancient cities  
six meters deep

under cubic tons. Here  
no weight could warn.

No weight could silence.  
Here marvel. Here wonder. Here that ash.

Here those mouths—  
those mouths still.

### Art Information

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Beth Marzoni's poems have recently appeared or are forthcoming in *Hayden's Ferry Review*, *Cimarron Review*, *Puerto del Sol*, and *Grist*, among others. Her collaborations with Monica Berlin have been published in *Colorado Review*, *DIAGRAM*, and *New Orleans Review*, among others. Their book, *No Shape Bends the River So Long*, won the 2013 New Measure Poetry Prize and is forthcoming from Free Verse Editions at Parlor Press in 2014.

Marzoni co-edits *Pilot Light*, a journal of twenty-first century poetics and criticism, and teaches writing and literature at Viterbo University in La Crosse, Wisconsin.

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