

AROUND THE WORLD IN FORTY YEARS

All my life you were waiting:
a boy too old for me, of course, smoking and spitting curses
against the bare shop floor, working graveyard
to get the bread together to sail around the world -

It all changed meaning, then: *around the world, bread, even
graveyard*, eventually. First a metaphor for midnight, then
a place to spread a blanket on the grass. Finally, a barren field
sown only with regretful bones.

Even with another mouth hard against my own,
I felt you waiting: a man born sad, who then grew sadder,
a man left behind when he meant to be leaving,
still standing on the deck of neat boat manned
by tiny ghosts, a boat I think was named
for me: *The Sweet Kate*, I guess, or *Dance Calypso*.
Maybe *Summertime*.

- Anna Scotti