
POETRY | FALL 2021

Waiting

By Sophia Wilson

He leans on her, and his stick
She steers him away from rusting rails, roaring water
and open drains — keeps to a safe line beside the kerb

Waves rear and slap retaining walls,
tossing up ricochets of spray

He licks his lips, tastes fresh, wild salt,
hears through shell-shaped hearing aids,
the bellow of rising tide,

feels the pavement tremble, and
understands the ocean's impatience to break through

Beyond the promenade, a headland crouches,
pinned down by tar-seal, pocked with concrete,
poised to plunge

He too, yearns to plunge — to retro-dive
to when there was more opening than closing

But she's time-glancing,
on-the-clock brusque,
her mind, hours ahead

It's time to return him to the waiting place

Sophia Wilson is a writer whose work has appeared in publications including Australian Poetry Anthology, Poetry New Zealand, Blackmail Press, Not Very Quiet, Mayhem, Landfall and Bestmicrofiction 2021. Her poetry was recognized recently in the Kathleen Grattan Prize, the Robert Burns Poetry Competition, the Hippocrates Prize and the Caselberg Trust International Poetry Prize. She lives in New Zealand with her partner and three Eurasian daughters.

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