



Not Somewhere Else
But Here

*A Contemporary Anthology of
Women and Place*

Edited by Erin Elizabeth Smith
T.A. Noonan
Rhonda Lott
Beth Couture

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REBECCA FISH EWAN

NIGHT DIVE OFF SAN MIGUEL ISLAND

After Adrienne Rich

Our fists opened to explosions of diatomic stars,
super nova bursts from our palms.

We began our descent—lighting an octopus dance,
inky with stage mist. Tentacles pulsated
off my hand. We drifted like flying flags—
one continuous wave weaving among coral-painted boulders
into a bite of salt.

Baby abalone shell tucked like a thermometer under my tongue;
I twirled the shell in my mouth, held it in my teeth, as if
I was a young seal displaying a new toy.

I can still see the silent migration of green sticks
illuminating our heads like neon haloes
as we explored the kelp forest...

Now I watch television, explain facts to my husband
while pointing towards Charlton Heston
diving a wreck:
“This film was made before high-pressure hoses—
see how the regulator comes directly off the tank.”

Everything has changed.
I cling to that knowledge
to excuse what's become of me.

My husband nods at my information,
so useless in the desert.

I lick my lips for salt.

We drift off to sleep.