LOUISE GLÜCK

ARCHIPELAGO

The tenth year we came upon immense sunlight, a relief
of islands locked into the water. These became our course.
Eleven months we drifted, toward the twelfth
wandered into docile ocean, a harbor. We prepared for peace.
Weeks passed. And then the captain saw
the mouth closing that defined our port—we are
devoured. Other voices stir. Water
sneers against our ship, our shrunk number runs
in two packs: madness and suicide. The twelfth year
the captain calls his name, it has no meaning, and the crew
shrieks in its extremity.