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THE THIRD WRECK

By Felix Hormiga

—What's all this?

—It's called sea.

—Fine, but is it at all useful or is it merely distance?

—We use it to measure the strength of our hope.

Obviating the intoxication of language, the third of the wrecks, dumb during the conversation, put his hand in the water and cupping it contemplated the living liquid. The small portion of ocean rippled in tiny waves. In its midst, a fragile vessel sturdily braved the waves. The depths of the small ocean had deep rifts, fissures and unknown heights, (that only clairvoyants can translate). A shoal of fish shone the metal of their scales and pressed their lips to the ocean's border, there where the palm of the hand rose in a steep cliff.

Deep in thought the third wreck made of his discovery the only possible world. He enrolled in the minute vessel and lost his mind. His voice dried up for good and against the portico of his chest he sheltered his particular sea.

The two companions lamented the silent dementia of their friend.

—Soon it'll be our turn.

—Poor man.

Twenty days later the boat was found by a trawler. Below its keel, a shoal of fish were spread out in a silver carpet.

Two of the wrecks were dead. Their bodies damaged by hunger, thirst and sun revealed a multitude of cuts in the dry skin. Their eyes, infected by the sea, had turned lightest of blues.

The third, having become a sailor of his hand cupped ship, slept peacefully during his hours of rest. His concave palm cupped the ocean's plenitude and over his life-line the brilliant hues of the ship that salvaged him shone in reflection.