

## Appraisal

I did not think the mind could mind so much —  
relinquishing its sleep at the oars  
for a furious rowing over churning seas,  
the appraisal of forty years.

I shall find change, I thought, a simple matter  
of load adjustment, properly measured oars,  
of learning how high the bow may surge  
before the stern plunges.

I study winds and tides, their relations  
to the shore — seek some solid coast.  
Forty years I jettison. Lightened,  
the craft crests agitating waves.

All winds blow toward a coast's blue tip:  
forested coves, warm beach, sheer cliff.

MARY BALAZS