

Isabell Serafin
Echolocation Signals

Some evenings ago I had a dream. I was back in South Africa. A taxi pulled up before a house. The day was sun-drenched. The house was surrounded by a large brick wall. The day was so hot it seemed I had a fever. I was thinking about the pair of elephants we spotted along the roadside the previous afternoon, how the baby reached its trunk through the window of the Jeep, how I shrieked as its rough trunk grazed my face. I was thinking about how you laughed.

The wall about the house was fashioned for burglars. There were shards of multi-colored bottles cemented at the top. Great smears of frozen cement seemed to ooze from between the bricks. The blue, red and green pieces of glass glinted mischievously in the sun like candy. Their glare caused tears to form at the corners of my eyes. I handed the taxi driver twenty rand. When I told him to keep the change he shrugged and smiled. A dog barked exactly six times. I walked into the house. Inside a small, cool, shaded room, a thin blonde woman took my hand.

Later in the dream, amniotic fluid, we are surrounded, bathing in it. You and I, we share a womb. In the space we float. We grasp one another's tiny hands. Neither of us remembers a time when we were without the other. We swim in this opaque, iridescent fluid, twinned together in a fetal dance.

In our post-natal life, we are continents apart. We navigate rich infant water. We send echolocation signals, the kind dolphins send. We send them through darkness, often in dreams. The ones you send bounce off my body. I feel you and then transverse the water between us.