

**Fake Islands III**

I pestle sea rice

on the shore, mix with

shipwreck's pitch.      Black damper, sun-baked.

This fickle sandbar, sickle or grin-shaped,

once danced latitude to latitude,

Sulu to Pacific to Atlantic, reinventing itself

as skerries & keys, atolls & trashbergs;

sometimes a white continent of fresh powder.

But now, I proclaim it an *island*—

pin it in place like Borneo birdwing.

Seawall of headstones, flag of human hair.

A hoarse anthem

improvised every hour.

The faces of the drowned were orchids in tar.

The syncopated intifada of their hearts,

life rebelling against death, peals still—

beneath these waves the silt-writ columbarium.

I scan horizon for skull n cross bones or pirouetting plume,

speak a doa into the sand for you

who may never come.

Swirling alphabet.

Sovereign aloneness.

Pulverised coral.

All islands dissolve.