

# Noche

ERICA GOSS

*for Maria De Los Santos*

Once in Mulege, Jose's father drove me back  
to the long beach coated with moonlight.

Fish lingered in black water, suspended on  
their plastic bones. The boat rocked slowly,

chipping blue paint into the swells. Two naked  
boys floated by in a canoe, quietly laughing.

At sunset, fishermen had pulled a turtle from the sea  
and lain her on her back. She took three hours to die,

flippers tracing circles in the air. Jose's  
father let me out and drove back to town.

I sat in the cool sand and stared at  
the charcoal outlines of mountains.

Turtle meat is pearl colored. It leaves  
a film of oil inside the mouth.

All night the taste of the sea rolled  
over my tongue. When the moon set

I saw star after star  
streak the dark with white fire.