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Fred Alsberg

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Emptying the Mirror

by Fred Alsberg

A fringe of white hair
framing his lemur eyes,
he sits at the edge of the bed,
and the book in his hands
reminds him of when, as a boy,
turned pages were waves.
It seems to him that his body,
wrinkled and dry, has now curled;
he feels himself shrink inward

through bellies of birds and fish,
through shells and smaller shells and smaller still,
until for a moment, he looks outward
from a single cell,
before dissolving in water
that mends without a scar,
a sea that breaks upon the nothingness
where Buddha came to sit and rest.

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