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## Leaving Sixty

Walt McDonald

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# Leaving Sixty

by Walt McDonald

Bring back the days of waves slapping the shore,  
gulls and rowboats bobbing on the bay.  
Rocking at night, we talk, amazed  
we're so old, clouds drifting south in gusts,  
barometer falling. Nights, we go away  
by writing love notes in the dust

on night stands. Coronado crossed these plains  
out of breath, cursing, his polished armor  
strapped to horses, offering crosses for grain,  
hoping to reach the Gulf before he starved.  
His soldiers threatened the Indians for rain,  
for gold. What if he didn't return to Mexico  
broke, but found the gold and sailed to Spain,

loaded with spice and bracelets? How long  
would he curse his luck and sulk, how old  
before these distant cactus plains  
were what he missed, these dusty fields we own,  
swapping all for armor rusting in the hall  
and a galleon anchored in the bay?

