

Moon Jellyfish

Unhitched, you rise—a Chinese lantern trailing ribbons,
clenching and unclenching,
swallowing space as you sail
with fathomed grace through the dark;
now motionless, adrift; now climbing an invisible cord,
more trick of light than living thing,
a palpitation, a visual echo
of your old name, *sea lung*.

Your bell's a nerve net, frilled with cobweb
strands; four pink gonads glow
like sun-shot cherry blossoms; tentacles waft
plankton into the harbour of your mouth—
like the mind feeling its way into a half-remembered idea, the tongue
into a familiar sex, the way we sense, by degrees,
the murmur of wind, the brush
of weed against ankles, the shiver of wing-beat
as a fulmar skims the foam.

On bright nights you gather in your thousands,
phosphorous, moon spawn,
utterly dependent on your mother's pull, a bloom
of photons returning to their source,
a fleet retreating to the carrier, the flux
of neurons during each inhalation
as the breath journeys through sleep,
washes up with a sigh.

SHARON BLACK