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About those dead on various beachheads

Nancy Sullivan

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About those dead on various beachheads

When all the white and swollen beauty of whatever sea
Sprawls upon a chosen beach
Like alabaster crushed,
It is curious remembering that many once lay here
Dead, or almost so.
Soon, few who wade the rock pools

On such pauper landscape
Will recall those who once rose
Like grave pirates out of the sea
Only to fall again.
Children will fling scarred shells
Over their grave;
Fisherman will cast slack, expectant lines
Out to where those once were caught
Beneath the taut and instant strike of war.

—Nancy Sullivan

Lombardy Poplars in New Mexico

Spring

An old woman,
reduced to searching
for green portents
in her mirror
discovers that she is not
a dowager countess
sunning herself, wrapped
in winter shawl,
but has sent shoots
into a dry country.

Summer

High country,
hot country,
dry country,
and a river.

Autumn

It seems
the leaves
have eaten
too much sun.

—Joel L. Markman