

Distant Shore

I.

Every time I start a new one—

blank page,
beginning keystrokes—

I feel a bit like the castaway:
writing his message,
setting it afloat in a bottle, dreaming
of the distant shore where
another human being might care
about my plight
(or not).

II.

Most bottles swamp and sink—to rest
among the dead.
Consider all the poems conceived,
but never read.

More than we can count have tried,
and simply disappeared for every hero
history will come to know.
How many theories stir how many minds
before the simplest truth might
find someplace to grow?
Thousands sprout in order to achieve
one tree-top, worthy of its spread.
And countless leaves must fall to make
a single imprint in the stone.

III.

Each new beginning represents
a dream—a chance, perhaps, to leave
our frail imprint
upon somebody's stone or shore.
And so another leaf departs its tree today,
to join the ranks of history's fallen
and unknown,
while theory undergoes a test as I,
crouching on my stretch of beach,
release this bottle—transferring custody
to whatever waves pass close enough
for me to reach.

Steve Bloom
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