

## SILABOUT

When I was young I was very very young  
—Hesitant, timid, unsure of windsong;  
Very overtly young, I back ‘round furled  
—Incredulous on the cusp of the world—  
Reluctant to stride through that festooned door  
To the intoxicated world’s  
*danse-macabre* swirl.

Look up, look ahead, direct persistence  
—Forward on tack, disregard resistance,  
Aim toward farther shore than most would go;  
Walk into the rain as if it mattered or no;  
Merely another lusty day in spring  
When, reaching out, tulips kiss  
the last of snow.

‘Midst roll of lapis waves that broach the strand,  
I—like Simon’s “rock”—uncharted island  
Asea, grown with vines verdant and savage  
With uncounted inhabitants hiding behind foliage,  
Peering cockatoos poised to fly any moment—  
Unopened orchids face the  
windward’s passage.

Bathing in fragrance: jasmine, nutmeg, lime,  
Scents trade calm: coconut, plumeria—  
To welcome sails that flail to my port of call  
I stand on deck with compass, leery but thrall—  
One yearning needle points to Tahiti,  
One other  
to Ithika.

--J. F. Lowe