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Aqiqah: The Boat Speaks

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**Hart Crane Memorial Poetry Contest
2017 Winner**

Jen Karetnick

Aqiqah: The Boat Speaks

I was born barely competent from the ribs of men.
Not in the way you've heard before—the first human

sparing one from his left side to form a body so dissimilar
he had to rename it, pre-fixed into Christian myth: woman.

I admit, there are some coincidences. By my own count,
on the sixth day I was sanded for the use of moneymen,

then painted for movement in the belly of the night
in the way that is the preference of so many men

who pretend disapproval but disguise desire with prayer.
Outwardly, I was Eliza: hardly a lady for a gentleman.

So perhaps it is more accurate to say that I was hacked
from the trees of Tunis into succulent ribs, the hands of men

bonding me into a corset, fitting me to a country
where no one makes decisions, not even men,

to be stuffed like a gutted pepper with a never-ending mix
of brightly spiced *futbol* jerseys flavored with the scent of men,

then set to roast again on a convective sea where a cortege
of waves carried me not to an end destined by gods or men

but to a middle where borders are invisible symptoms
and the disease is sacrifice, mandated for all obedient women.