

**SAMPLE POEMS FROM**

# **Heliotropia**

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## Before Clarity

I am you in your jewel-domed reading room,  
I am you in your kayak skimming.  
— Phyllis Webb

The sky is inverted. I call you in the bare yellow night.

I am you against the river of clouds,  
I am you in an energy current trembling down the bedroom walls,  
  
you in the contrapuntal stream of two trees  
racing vertically away from the earth.

The sea is inverted. Midnight sun  
at our southern latitude glows beneath our feet.  
I call you from the land that is now our sea.

There is no becoming; I always was.

Now all events are kisses, a softness  
in the morning before clarity settles in.

You in the exhalations that clear out the day's old dust,  
you, large enough to hold the sun.

The vapour of knowing might be lost, the dream  
we never woke from. You,

I am floating in saltwater in our sea that was once land.

## Watching Star Trek with you

from The Next Generation, Season 2, Episode 20: "The Emissary"

Haven't you heard the first rule, Worf?  
You never say I love you on the first date.  
Or at least, you never ask for  
forever after the first mate. We're all here

circling around one planetary orbit  
to another, just trying to find our own place  
in the farthest ends of the ever-infinite worlds.  
We know, you'd say, "tlhIngan jIH"

but there's something holographic in all of us  
that flickers as blood drips down  
from her palm to your arm. We get the impulse.  
When skin is to skin a pulsar we too would tilt

our heads up to the sky and harmonize with a  
growl. We'd want her to stay. To slay  
our enemies and then draw our blades  
at the other's throat before we growl. Haven't

you heard, Worf? Of the slow game: love  
poetry's fullest flowering in the great expanse  
of untrekked space. So human  
is trust, we inevitably orbit back around.