

# NOTHING TO DECLARE, 2015

## THE ROCK

by Henri Cole

It's nice to have a lake to love me,  
that can see under all my disguises—  
where there is only animal survival  
and the brutality of the unconscious—  
and still love me and give me focus  
and intensity, like a robin listening  
to dirt for worms (those birds have talents  
I don't: flying around with one eye closed  
and half their brain asleep).

Alone,

I like to swim (with no goggles, cap, or board)  
out where I can see, high up, the white cedars,  
and beyond that only the della Robbia blue.  
On the other shore, a white pelican sits  
on a rock, and, sometimes, feeding him—  
beside the sign that says: DO NOT FEED THE PELICAN—  
I think about all the dogmas and traditions  
which are like well-made beds, with fitted sheets  
and tucked-in hospital corners, to die in.

On my rock, it's as if everything is lit from below  
or from within. There's no hierarchy  
with pelican, water, rock, cedar, sky, and me.  
A sense that all's right in the world prevails there—  
and some kind of rock language,  
with crude dents pressing my flesh,  
and little fishes kissing my submerged feet.