

MARY LOU SOUTAR-HYNES

Soundings

i.

No coral breath
or sand, no sun
just water's marbled urgency, a body's longing —
still deep enough for drowning

Alternate days,
she seeks out words, gathers them close beneath her ribs
slips into page
adrift in memory's wash —

Sundays at the Rockforth baths, Yallas Pond and St. Ann's
Roaring River, cataracts and cold springs
verging

ii.

Through the night
mercy's prayer —
absolution's ashes, water, salt, and wine

crystal-cloud insinuations
blue holes, pools and waterfalls — where a river goes
to ground

From the doorway
she sees both rooms — the cats curled into dreams
cobalt pillows, silent waiting —
water's lustrous language
like a skin

Note: The Rockforth baths is a spa near Kingston Harbour; Yallas Pond, one of two enclosed by sand spits, is in the Parish of St. Thomas; and roaring River is in St. Ann Parish. Source: Olive Senior, Encyclopedia of Jamaican Heritage (Twin Guinep Publishers: 2003), St Andrew, Jamaica.

Mary Lou Soutar-Hynes's poetry appears earlier in this volume.