

KAT CAMERON

Her Body an Island

Chaos on the other side of the door:

Lota dying in the bed beside her
and Bishop loses another lover.

All our lovers die—painfully or

suddenly, and we become absence,
perform that role, the dancer garlanded
with red roses. But Bishop refused,
overwhelmed by corporeal presence:

her body an island, seething geography
of immune deficiency, swollen by
cortisone, volcanos of emotion, ecology
of scabies-infected dogs and lice-

infested fish. Alone as Crusoe,
wandering the island when Friday died.

CLAUDIA COSTA

Weighted

You can do better, she's overweight.

As if my only value resides in the number
on a scale.

What does value weigh in at?

Can a scale measure

mended wounds
eased minds
or folded laundry?

What does it weigh

when I tell you I am proud

lend an empathetic ear

make a sacrifice

or a meal?

What do the numbers say of a heart
still heavy with the belief
it's unlovable
yet never stopped pumping out love.

What could be better than
aesthetic pleasure?

A lust for —

wisdom
vulnerability
truth
connection
justice
compassion
understanding
self actualization.

I placed my value on a scale.

It came in
overweight.