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Sailing Through Chicago

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SAILING THROUGH CHICAGO

Here in August
The air just sort of lies on you
Like steaming barber's towels
And you're sweating bullets
From the minute you step outside
To mingle your sweat
With the hot stink of Vienna hot dogs
And Polish sausage and exhaust fumes
And to mix your wordless noise
With the snap of heeled shoes on pavement
And the rumble and honk of diesel-engine taxicabs
With spitting, swearing drivers
Who ferry masses a person at a time
With their bags packed up like their lives
To and from the heart which is
An airport twice the size of your hometown
Where you have a value in yourself.
But here you're a grain.

The only true baptism requires immersion,
To be in it and it in you.
Not Byzantium, then,
But here—

Matt Mosman