

Michael Waters

The Tether

Miles-deep rents in the floor's
gritty fabric where water
spews into water, a primal
violence at the earth's core,

attract the alien, light-
leaking fistulae and pods
that ascend and fall, ascend
and fall, misshapen aspirants

assuming endless pilgrimage.
The bubbling faults beckon them
forth. And the marine
biologist hunkered in metal,

the uterine bathysphere,
gazes open-mouthed
when the surface generator
triggers the lamps to reveal

such impossible yearning:
God's disinherited, the nameless
flaws, who have so much farther
to climb, their mute kingdom

allowing its immense blackness
to conceal His cold
fumblings, furious gestures,
as if we might begin again

among these divine zeroes,
these creaturely scraps
mimicking grace, these
nightmarish drafts of flesh,

these never-to-be-called.
Some almost-shape drifts by.
Awe. A distant knocking.
— Then the long haul.