

Wallowa Lake Monster

Sufjan Stevens

As if you know the story of Wallowa Lake:
Leviathan first hid in the deep where her children sleep
She kept them hidden from the plague

But have you heard the story of my mother's fate?
She left us in Detroit in the rain with a pillow case
Fortune for the paper weight

We followed her to Joseph, near the Indian raid
She wept among the weeds, hide and seek, for the fallen chief
Spathiphyllum on his grave

And like the cedar wax wing, she was drunk all day
We put her in the sheet, little wreath, candles on the crate
As the monster showed its face

As she waits for her children in the shade
Demogorgon or demigod the ghost parade
No oblation will bring her back to our place

She stayed within the deep end of Wallowa Lake
The undertow refrained with the flame of a feathered snake
Charybdis in its shallow grave

She gave us one last feature: the fullness of her face
In the shade of "Hin-mah-too-yah..." (Red Napoleon)
As the demon took her place

As we wait for the waters to reside
Her remarkable stoicism and her pride
When the dragon submerged we knew she had died