Ode to Ed

You taught my three-year-old daughter the word “scintillate,”
and now we call it Ed’s word.
It means to sparkle or twinkle like the stars.

So you appear, shining on the east or west coast,
a brilliant flash, a firefly impossible to catch in the morning’s glare.
You have helped us to know our places,
inviting us to remember their distinctive borders,
to paint them and watch them shimmer beneath our feet –
as if the world is made of water
reflecting us back to ourselves in all of our broken, blurry humanity,
revealing the fraying edges of our patched-up,
scintillating souls.
Yet we learn to swim – frantically at first,
dipping up and down beneath the waves
like the souls clumsily following in the train of their first gods in Plato’s myth.

You’ve taught us how to swim in texts and places,
which are more than places, which spill over every page.
Thanks to you, we know our slavish love of time,
our failures to be there where we are,
to stay and to linger with those we are among –
those others and other others,
the white-capped waves off the coast of Maine,
the dabs of clouds, the rocky ledge.
The farther out we swim with you,
the more we learn that things that sparkle
need not fade.

So let us forget the time today,
the hour and date
the sands slipping by.
Instead let us swim together in place,
floating and gazing upward,
lit only by the scintillation of the star’s tail
that arced its way from there to here
on the day you were born.

Happy Birthday Ed.

–Megan, March 2014