

# Claudia K. Grinnell

## **From Now On**

*For Richard*

It will all be true: the birth  
of the compass: imagine:  
China, 2000 years ago.

A sailor watches as men  
throw an iron rock on the floor.  
Without fail

it points toward a certain star,  
a certain north. Soon all ships  
of the Chinese fleet possess this magic

rock: if you look long and hard  
enough, you will notice  
that there are no miracles

on which faith is predicated,  
you will notice  
that the world cradles in its stone

another stone that no one has  
yet unearthed.

## **Stabat Mater**

*At the cross her vigil keeping,  
stood the mournful mother weeping. . .*

Her tears, his blood: a monk  
in his cell celebrating  
his solitary struggle—nails  
in his flesh, her lips searching  
for his. He is thin,  
even his heartbeat is visible  
under the arched ribcage.  
Her hands find no resistance.

The head so deeply bowed,  
yet too far for her  
kiss: she kisses him  
where his feet  
have turned crimson.  
Yet his skin, his skin  
remembers, answers in notes,  
extracts from love  
an echo.