The Egg Masses of the Moon Snail

Kim Roberts

Beltway Poetry Quarterly

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*Lunatia heros*

Every living thing between high tide and low is a colonist who meets his sea of troubles day by day in a quiet but effective manner.

— N.J. Berrill and Jacquelyn Berrill, *1001 Questions Answered about the Seashore*

At low tide, long trails wind through the sand flats. The enormous foot of the moon snail glides rapidly through soft sand, never breaking the surface, in search of clams. Such deftness, a flood through its pale, pulsing, salty flesh.

The moon egg cases, extruded from the mantle cavity—one continuous gelatinous sheet—resemble rubber plungers plumbers use to open clogged drains. Sand cements mucous; each one contains half a million larvae. You can find dislodged egg masses, green-gray, at low tide, detached clergyman’s collars errant and wasted.