

# Said The Sea Was Folded: Love Poems That Unfold the Heart



**I said the sea was folded: love poems** by Erik Jensen

★★★★☆ 4 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 2948 KB

Text-to-Speech : Enabled

Screen Reader : Supported

Enhanced typesetting : Enabled

Print length : 83 pages



## An to Ocean Vuong and His Poetic Vision

Ocean Vuong is a Vietnamese-American poet, essayist, and novelist whose work has garnered widespread critical acclaim. His debut poetry collection, "Night Sky with Exit Wounds," won the Whiting Award and the T.S. Eliot Prize. Vuong's work is deeply personal and often explores themes of love, loss, trauma, and the Vietnamese-American experience.

## "Said the Sea Was Folded": A Love Story in Fragments

"Said the Sea Was Folded" is Vuong's second poetry collection and continues his exploration of love and loss. The collection is structured as a series of fragmented love poems that together form a larger narrative of longing, desire, and heartbreak. The poems are addressed to a lover, but they also speak to the universal experiences of love, loss, and the search for connection.

## **The Language of Love and Loss**

Vuong's poetry is known for its rich imagery and evocative language. He uses vivid metaphors and similes to create a sensory experience for the reader. In "Said the Sea Was Folded," Vuong explores the physical and emotional aspects of love through images of the body, nature, and memory.

For example, in the poem "Someday I'll Love Ocean Vuong," the speaker describes the act of making love as "a body folding into a body / like origami, a map / in reverse." This image captures the physical intimacy of the act, but it also suggests the emotional vulnerability and risk involved in surrendering to love.

Vuong also uses the natural world to express the emotions of love and loss. In the poem "On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous," the speaker compares the pain of heartbreak to "a forest fire / burning down / everything I've ever loved." This image conveys the overwhelming and destructive nature of loss.

## **The Power of Memory and Trauma**

Memory and trauma play a significant role in "Said the Sea Was Folded." Many of the poems explore the ways in which past experiences shape our present relationships. In the poem "Notebook Fragments," the speaker reflects on a childhood memory of abuse and how it has impacted their ability to love and be loved.

Vuong writes:

"I remember the way my father / held me down, his hands / like two anvils / making my body / a sheet of metal, / the way he folded me / into a shape / I

would never know."

This passage reveals the lasting effects of trauma and the ways in which it can shape our identity and our relationships.

### **Queer Love and the Search for Connection**

"Said the Sea Was Folded" also explores the complexities of queer love and the search for connection. Vuong writes about the challenges and joys of loving someone who is different from oneself. He also celebrates the beauty and resilience of queer communities.

In the poem "Someday I'll Love Ocean Vuong," the speaker addresses their lover, who is also a man:

"Someday I'll love you / the way a boy loves his father / the way a man loves his country / the way a woman loves her body."

This passage celebrates the diversity of love and the ways in which it can transcend traditional boundaries.

### **Nature Imagery and the Search for Meaning**

Nature imagery plays a central role in "Said the Sea Was Folded." Vuong uses images of the natural world to explore the human condition and our search for meaning. In the poem "Ode to Lithium," the speaker describes the ocean as a source of both beauty and pain:

"The ocean is a mirror / that shows me / my own reflection / and the faces / of all those who have drowned."

This passage suggests that the ocean can be both a source of inspiration and a reminder of our own mortality.

"Said the Sea Was Folded" is a powerful and moving collection of love poems that explores the complexities of love, loss, identity, and the search for connection. Ocean Vuong's rich imagery, evocative language, and deeply personal narratives make this collection a resonant and unforgettable work of art.

Whether you are a seasoned poetry reader or new to the genre, "Said the Sea Was Folded" is a must-read. It is a book that will stay with you long after you finish reading it.

## Additional Resources

\* [Ocean Vuong's website](https://oceanvuong.com/) \* [The Whiting Foundation](https://www.whiting.org/) \* [The T.S. Eliot Prize](https://www.poetrysociety.org.uk/prizes/the-t-s-eliot-prize/)



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