

At The Chicago Oceanarium; Or, Ms. C. Otter

by Harry Brown

—for McKenzie

spends most of her time in water but stays dry
as August, the short, wooly underfur
stuffed with air, Mother's best comforter
that keeps Ms. C most cozy. Moreover, with this life jacket
she'll never drown, and with her arctic cloak
of airy hair lined with blubber never shiver.
Ms. Otter grows more hair per square inch
than any other sibling on our earth—
as much as three such folks like us can sprout.
Wearing but her coat of fat—no outer shell
of hairy air—Ms. Otter would need to eat
each day one quarter of her pounds to feed
her furnace.

To stay afloat and keep her house
dry and clean, Ms. Otter knows she orta—
and thus does—comb and blow into her fur,
while Mother's oil and air waterproof her roof.