

“Unknown Distances”

*Iliana Emilia Garcia, 2006-7
printed 2012, ink-jet print on canvas*

Not
this deserted stretch of beach this
morning fog...
And that slick border of sand
would make a slapping sound
were I to run
barefoot
along the very edge

(the foam
on my left
receding)

as I did after school those years
four of them,
striding to the Cliff House
and back: practice.

Not
this shoreline—a kind of liquid lace
gathering at the corners

of your mouth
that Sunday you ran with me:
the starter’s pistol, mile 1,
mile 5,
veering
off at mile 10...
—The San Francisco
Marathon I finished
at fifteen. Not

this ocean’s palette—muted, barely
green: a fringe of froth
along the top dissolving
into sky, half this canvas
white
—a kind of absence.

But rather:

this human invention
—two of them—
of weathered
wood, tightly woven

for sitting.

And if you were seated on the right, in the distance
and I in the one
on the left
in the foreground,
we'd

be facing each other
We might even

speak.