Of Freshwater and Ships

I float
   in the clear shimmering water
Of the famous
   Lake Superior
Of which ships flow through
Day
And night.
Breathing misty air
In
and out
Of my slightly blue tinted lips
I rise and fall
   to the rhythm of the waves
Like a fish balancing
Water
and air
To float
And sink
To the depth of the frozen lake
And a cargo ship
Releasing ballast,
Sighing almost,
After a long journey.
Small minnows dart below me
Escaping from
Invisible shadows.
A 1000 foot boat 
With lights that 
stand out like stars 
Against ebony night 
And a coat of paint that blends perfectly 
with dark surreal surroundings 
Passes my watchful eye 

Underneath the shining bridge 
And into the harbor 
While the sunlight reflects 
Off of churning water 
With cheers resonating through the air 
and shouts of happiness increase 
From the harbor 
As a Canadian ship enters 
Into the world of Duluth 
Inhale 
and exhale the ballast 
Get ready for another trip through the 
Great Lakes 

Rocking to and fro 
Freshwater lapping the insides 
Of a cargo boat. 
Ballast infested with zebra mussels 
And purple loosestrife 
strangling the weak wood. 
Sea lampreys
Drink the soul out of
The other inhabitants of Lake Superior.
Round gobies and rainbow smelt
Circle the perimeter menacingly
Eyeing small frightened fish
Hiding beneath sticks and stones
From other worlds.
The invasive ones eat,
Leaving nothing behind
For the original Great Lakes citizen.

Milly Timm
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