*The First Visit* Anne C. Totero

"You are the first therapist I am coming to." The Gift. The Dance. The Prose. A beautiful dance. Your life as a piece of art. I prepare the materials so you may paint your own piece. We are greeted with uncertainty. Furrowed fear on their temples with gentle hands to shake. Hello, welcome to your fate. Fate in the hands of a stranger. Fate to large feat. Sit where you feel comfortable. In a cold, unfamiliar room with dimmed lights. Where others have confessed their sins outside of church. Confessed their stuck and complexities. Others have bled their truth onto the crocheted carpet. Expression without strings attached. It is uncomfortable and new. You spin into this whirlwind of disaster where you've written your sonata. Your series. Your saga. Lunar eclipses lapse and here you are. Patterned. You have figured out how to forgive, you think. Forgetting, well. Capacity and sufficiency are all questions. Swimming to the shore yet out of breath. Ripple waters look high for you yet calm by the shore seekers. Gentle kicks below the surface to stay afloat. Take my hand. I know it took trust to take it. It took you 21 years to get here and the current comes in a short meaning of time. Focus on the tide. I promise it'll find it's way back. Ride the waves. Ride the one wave. Duck under. Try not to float but enter with intention. Do you see yourself on the horizon or on the beach where you've come from? Swim with your feet up, eyes forward, and forceful arms to the horizon. The current is underneath us. It's scary here. And hopeful. The water seems dark and anything but blissful. Swim for the horizon. It'll get worse before it gets better.

There you are.