

waterways poetry

Lost Books



releasing new voices, revealing new perspectives

Lost Books

waterways
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What to Do by Daylight

Start with waking alone, because that's the way
you'll know that no one is watching. And then
comes stretching and blinking at the wall
or the ceiling depending on how sleep
found you, that is if sleep has even
found you at all. The way to tell if dreams
arrived in the early murk of morning
is to close your eyes again, wherever you are,
and search for a face, any face hallowed enough
to have left its lightning eyes behind.

Thunder Road

Something out of the wild blue. No matter how soft, I can hear
what you breathe above the wind, above the clear, as from close,
so near, the night breaks into speculation—

Something out of a story right there, you said.

Yes, I agreed, and started to think:

I could make something of this if I tried hard enough,
though I'm always trying lately and just putting my foot in it;
you would be amazed at the things I'm capable of saying
when it's forty degrees out and sushi is all I've had to eat.

That isn't what I meant.

Railroad tracks remind me strongly of Connecticut, where I lived
just this side of them, but never once heard a train.

My world was the music library
and things I failed to do in practice rooms
while others filled my pen with song—

I could breathe this in and keep it.

You and your audible smile.

*Give me something to work with, I might have said; tell me
where the ghostly light of the soda machine goes when no one
is watching—do you suppose it's like a tree falling
in the forest when the only soul to hear didn't step away in time
to listen, to catch what's coming faster than her breath?*

It's things like this, you said. It's things like this.

Yes, I said, broken-record musing:

wondering if it fell at all, and if not, if it will fall where
I can catch approaching thunder; like fear on the air
I felt it, shied from it and did not hear

you say, *All right?*

Well, I think.

Not tonight.

Meanings

The rain could mean a lot of things. It might mean that we've caught a cold front, or that this is the End. Any number of possibilities. At the moment, there's water leaking into my train car through a tiny gap near the floor. Even though we're moving, the rain—that clever creature—is finding a way into our hearts, or at the very least our shoes. I know that the storm is nothing in comparison to what it is south, but there is something awful and damply true in the tiny leak that I am watching here in my corner of the train. It means the thoughts I've been having about endings will wet my heart and my shoes no matter how fast I think that I'm moving.