

AN ALMOST-GONE RADIANCE

Autumn Richardson

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*What is a body but an instrument
for the elements to carve and shape?*

What are bones but oracles?

OUROBOROS

I breathe in the sun's
dust, its cast off rays

throw the bones and see
the deaths of millions
littering time.



Rivers eat the earth, so too
does fire.

The extinct are housed within
ossuaries which are mountains.



To accept the necessity
of all experience is the way.



Snow falls, a white silence
initiating long sleep.

Lives lay buried, recovering.

Blindness can be rest.

COVEN

Among the dark trees are deer
and a fog glowing close to earth.

Disembodied they drift, lit tapers
in the dusk-light

as branches allow them passage
through arteries of instinct and memory

into the heart of Oligocene forests

where hoof-beats are blood murmurs
above stones and rivers

and antlers are the calcium of the air.

CROSSING THE INTERIOR

V

Trees have thinned.
My fire is a spark beneath vastness.

I add more twigs and breathe in
star-coldness.

There is a solitude here unlike
the solitude of trees.

Ahead – sharp clear dimensions
of granite, sky, wind

and water – there is no poverty
of water –

shored with shuddering stands
of minute wire-stemmed flowers

that rise like apparitions
through this bitten, broken world.

AN ALMOST-GONE RADIANCE

From between the darkneses
that pines gather
she emerges –

a tutelary deity
whose vast ribcage and sliver
of hoof have momentarily lifted
from another world.

Her crypis speaks:

*'Become as rooted as the swaying
trees.'*

*'Become stillness, your body held
up like a cup.'*

❧

I follow her to the rim of the lake's
wide iris.

It tracks our every movement, will
ingest us without thought, make of us
a salt-lick, another fat for its gullet.

And the forest too is omnivorous.

We must be cautious, for here
we are the same: configurations
of warm blood, and thick with scent.