

Wilderness House Literary Review 9/2

John Talmadge Vernon

Alder Forest Morning Snow

We walked along the path through the old woods,
Our silence along the river said more than words could.
The salmon jumped out of the water next to where we stood.
It said, "I've been in the cold water of this river all day,
There is no other world to me, but here on the dirt I'll lay".
Only from outside the stream could it know what it was in.
Staying in the water all one can do is learn to swim,
But once out, the fire seen in the distance is no longer dim.

My voice cried out with each water drop crashing under
The pools from the fall above, where all secrets hung like thunder.
The fear of not being accepted is thrown down, utterances
Plagued through the wind to convince us that the subsequent
Events would kill us.

We continued forward as the tip of the cattail dried.
All things now seem like an old game lost in too much time.
Pine arose from the needles laid along the path, the scent
Rising through our nostrils telling us what life they had was spent.
The expectation of beauty was seen though their days attached
To towering trees in the forest. Even after death, beauty of the
Needles poured in through our breath. This life of not caring
Is dying young, looking to live forever not caring, dying young.

As the sun melted behind the peaks, snow smeared down
From the de trop clouds filling the sky, but still we frowned.
The mistake was to see something this beautiful and not drown.

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The soul is torn by trouble

Alas tranquility is far from me
I have slipped away
From previously known serenity
The pages of my life have gone astray
Thoughts of perdition flood consistently
Through my conscience that was once gay
With thoughts of my future
But what fool would be to me a teacher
The creature I have in my mind today
That horrid beast created throughout my being
Whatever I try it will not go away
Cursed is the path of natural philosophy
It has torn out my morality
None of this could any human foresee
-Victor Frankenstein

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Disaster Poetry Makes A Profit

After the land was blown apart by rocks
Dino nuggets scattered the face of the earth
Ash was the snow without any beauty
The only one left was a brontosaurus
She built herself a raft to keep herself moving
Movement is what defines us and is the only rhyme

Life has a way of moving along even after a disaster
But to be the only one of your kind
This is not a feeling anyone could define
Except of course for the only one on the raft
She spent her time singing along the banks
But nothing was able to hear her song
Only the smallest creatures unaffected by the blast
Everything thought of in silence, prose or rhyme
Has or will exist somewhere in time

*This poem is part of a larger collection based on *Katie Vernon Illustrations*.