

Wilderness House Literary Review 9/2

Sandy Hiortdahl
Homing Instincts

Where I am now
Two sets of geese in "V"s
Coast in for a landing on the pond
Beside the mountain, flapping and happy
For the rest.

Where I come from
Ten thousand of these fellows will gather
On my father's fields, a nation
Of wanderers, a hundred tribes
On their way, on their way soon.

Now, a single goose approaches, stops,
Stands on one leg, cocking his head.
He's stopped here, where I am now
On his way to where I'm from:
In his eye I read the message.

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Sea Days

At dawn, dew gleams on the white-bellied skiff,
On the rusted trailer hidden by weeds.
Silently, we check tires and pack her up,
Eager for waves, and spray; lured by sea-winds.
Wobbly she descends from ramp to water,
Wobbly we board and steer toward freedom,
Called to the channel and beyond it
To the low blue horizon of the sea.
Our skiff bobs with the sea's quick hugs
And we cast our lines into the green deep.
Nesting osprey herald us from buoy Six--
We call out, point and smile as humans do.
This day we'll catch four bass, two cat, a rock,
Then head our Little Dipper back to dock.

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Just Past The Bullrush

We wade
Into the salt marsh, watching
Two cranes pick their way
Along the tide's edge.

Small fish
Pool in the eddies, silver
In the dim, sweet light
Beside the river.

Cat tails
Surround us like old, dear friends,
As a lone cricket
Keeps time, keeps time, keeps...