

Wilderness House Literary Review 9/2

Shannon O'Connor
Broken Tranquility

I sit on the bench,
the river rustles,
birds chirp,
everything tranquil.
The afternoon light glows.

All of a sudden, a woman
and a man with hoarse French
voices start a fight,
screaming at each other.

I can't understand what they are saying, but from the tone
of their voices they're either fighting
about money or love.

She might be telling
him they need to get out of this nowhere
village and go somewhere
with their lives.

She wants excitement and alcohol.
She wants a café in Paris.
She wants anything else.
But he doesn't have a job
and neither does she.

She may have discovered
that he has a lover
somewhere else, who is more exotic,
refined, intelligent.
A woman with fashionable clothes.
She screams at him
because she doesn't want him
to leave her in this dull village.

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With the peaceful river,
and the gentle light,
and the birds, the fresh clean air.
Why would anyone want
to come here?
Why would anyone want to stay?
Why would anyone want to leave?
Things aren't always what's on the surface.
Things aren't always pink clouds
on a blue sky.