

Towpath

Caroline Cook

Green doesn't know where it is. Seed falls random
as light rain as light falls and nothing knows
where it falls.

Water doesn't know its own state, or where
it is or where it comes from. See how it slides in vague
indolent drift unaccountable for leavings unaware.

Air doesn't know how it is still today, or how it feels
or that it seems wrung-out, hung over everything
like rags.

Suddenly the swags of rosehips on low dusty bushes
sway en masse and rise and rest again, and never know
what lifts them. Hangdown heads of thistles brown
some silver, even powdery do not remember
only hours ago how stiff they were, how fervent.

Stab of new-cut grass opens a memory.
These brambles scratch on little sparks that flare and shrivel.
Out of the blue above me seldom splash of clear sky
takes me back to sea.

Scrag-land doesn't know that it is,
or where it is, or what it now replaces. Tiny flower-faces
wind round brick-stumps. No one needs to know their names.
The brick says nothing being useless
having lost all trace of what it once adjoined.

Green doesn't know where it is. It is lidding the water.
This is the live lime-green of covering weed and that
the sombre green of leaves et cetera on trees I see no point in
naming. Everything is shifting like the clouds and nothing
knows where it has been
what makes it what it is or was or where
it goes to and the towpath closes suddenly
in padlocked gates.

