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THE MORNING, WALKING

Luci Shaw¹
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The morning, walking

Landscape claims me as its inhabitant
where I am, wherever I am.
It's as if Creation listens, absorbed
in contemplation, just being there.

Here, on the trail, the air barely lifts a leaf
among the green curtains of trees
or stirs the mist laying its pale garment
over the hill, under the bridge, between the barns.
Even under fog Your new day is radiant
with a common yet secretive beauty.
Distant traffic muted. Birds silent.

From the marsh a frog barks once.

Beside the lane the sentinel grasses of autumn
hear Your unspoken edict, lifting
their pale gold seed heads along the verges,
speaking without words.

1. Luci Shaw has been a Writer-in-Residence at Regent College in Vancouver since 1986. Since her book *Listen to the Green* appeared in 1971, she has been an influential voice in Christian poetry. Her numerous collections include *Scape* (Cascade Books, 2013), *Sea Glass: New and Selected Poems* (WordFarm, 2016), and, most recently, *Eye of the Beholder* (Paraclete, 2018). She is the recipient of the 2013 Denise Levertov Award, from *Image* journal.

A bicycle passes. For the cyclist
the road is a river flowing under his pedals.
The easy sound of tires on gravel,
and then again the mercy of calm.

I am not what I was an hour ago. Oh, Quietness,
Come home with me, show your green Self
through my window, away from the din of the world.
I claim You as I listen for You.

PLUNGE

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It's what I long to do, abandon
all caution and dive into the violent
blue at the heart of the wave,
going deep, leaving behind
the swirl of shore sand and sea weed,
the coarse sting of brine in the mouth,

yet here I am at the edge, the sand
sucking at my feet where the waves leave
the lace hem of ocean,
the foam imprint, the transient
signature of the Pacific.

The odor of desire
as the tide goes out and fog rises.

VESSEL

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The pitcher cries for water to carry.
—Marge Piercy

The heart of love deprived
of love demands—“Challenge
my capacity. Fill me so full
my surplus overflows.
Replenish to my brim
and make a little lake
of spillage. Make it a river.
Send it, foaming, over the cliff edge
into a profound pool. Let it be
drinkable, fresh, unlimited.”

A thin trickle, even a drip
may start a river.
Unstoppable.