



Volume 17
Issue 2
2023

Altered Routes / SAFEWATER

Dixie Partridge

Altered Routes

Awaiting Diagnosis

Late afternoon you turn off the path,
downhill riverside;
push through thick grasses and willow.
Fine filaments glint in the breeze

before sundown: sheer creation,
ongoing, without the need of anyone.
Tops of trees on the other side
light up like hammered gold.

Morning's rain has crisped all edges
and colors: more shades of green
than you've noticed in months,
lemon-lime to olive to jade.

The quiet denseness here is out of sight
of town walks and streets,
a dimension desired and slipped into
with that aching sense of the momentary.

With dusk come fading variegations
of light, the river placid over steep undertow,
and a longing deep as marrow
for such moments to be enough.

There's a faint thrum of insects that stops
when you stop. It's as though
only movement is acceptable,
but you don't want to move on

from faint healing offered
in the ongoing lap and lave of water
against this narrow shore.

SAFEWATER

Before Transplant

when days grate
like the scraping of boats tied too close
to the pier

when sound and sight
nag: the dark cumulus of someone
else's dreams

intricate of plot, of whys, of why nots
of throbbing races foreign to sailing
and a finish

that's never there

the lonely self, looking
for solace, finally
turns inward

beyond loneliness
drawing in the sails
it spins slowly

out into the harbor
heedless of breeze
absorbed only in reflections

of the sky's last light

About the Poet

Dixie Partridge, native of Wyoming, spent most of her adult life living along Columbia River in Washington State. She is the recipient of the U.S. national Eileen Barnes award. Email: pearantree@gmail.com