

One Day's Return, Long Past Childhood

*It is time . . . to locate ourselves
by the real things we live by.*

—William Stafford

You walk out beyond pasture
to see where it will take you. Dawn
blossoms from the hilltops. No breeze.
You come to still drowsing fields, a rock slope
with buttercups congregating.

Something in you scours the earth
for what memory knows you've wanted.
Bright flags of paintbrush, always erect.
A Meadowlark calling a brief pliant prayer.

Foothills now, and a stream
with its easy moving on. . . .
Scent of sage like remembrance.
Regrets come back with a sudden
moving shadow: overhead a hawk
glides and glides

then falls—
the clean precision of a blade.

Should you feel guilt for days
of loving something easy? You try
to pay attention—*all this normal beauty!*

In the press of high altitude sun,
you will turn back to the farmhouse
and cooling spring water . . .
bone ache almost welcome.

Soon dusk will rise up lavender
from all the hollow places—benediction
for one day's passing.

—Dixie L. Partridge

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