

# Traveling without Reservation

On a backroad, the only vacancy,  
as last light evaporated  
from tops of trees,  
we paused to look and listen  
anxiously about, to know the land a little  
before we slept.

Forest birds had taken cover  
in the tented places, long needles and bark floors  
padding the silence.

From the ground, darkness came on,  
stirrings of night animals  
sure of their way  
reaching us—imagined or real.

We fled to ourselves, places taut  
and pulsing, sleep a scant coverlet  
for senses that longed for release . . .  
to touch home.

Morning would bring a wet yellow light  
through the green.

It would be the world again.  
But for now, we would think of words  
unspoken in our ritual living—

*hair moss    bloodroot  
lichen    heartwood.*

Underground rivers and caverns  
would become the archives  
of being. For this night,  
we would dream and breathe  
in another history.

—Dixie Partridge