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Concrete Canals

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Concrete Canals

Bryan Wysopal

When January decided to be Spring,
I took a journey down the concrete canals,
dark and sleek;
hard onyx slabs pressed into soft, wet earth.

A day lovely and gray
graciously stayed the ticking hand
as I poled my barge down ways that I have known
for the eternity that constitutes my waking years,
making sure as well, to visit
those less noticeably engraved
with the grooves of my tread.

And I thought:

how strange to love and hate a place so!

How my memories,

like light rain

in this Spring-like breeze
spatter the whole of this suburban domain;

a drop here and there,
to solidify my claim—

on the gray shingled rooftops, and swathes of sickened green; the leveled, bulldozed hallowed fields, which were the stage set for my childish games.

I came at last, to a wide, hard lake amid a windy place

scarred by progress.

There my black barge rolled to a halt at the shore of a ruined forest whose thinning trunks

and colorless heights

could not conceal the abodes of men

as once they were able.

Here,

a pale green path cut through brown rushes and turned away

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out of sight

affording a brief moment
to suspend my disbelief
and pretend again
that where it led
was enchanting, mysterious
and wholly undiscovered.