

CREATIVE WRITING

"Where I Lived Was Far off as Many": Poems and Photographs on Bicentennial Thoreau

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***Where (I)**

consider every side of the landscape
summer and winter

each tree my fingers
to speak the truth, to be
generous

a poet of invisible attractions
protected by an interval between
the hollow and the recollection of voyages

ready to carry on like Atlas,
the world on my shoulders,
free and uncommitted
round and round

I do not propose to write an ode
but to wake up.



Where (II)

in the morning my imagination
retained the auroral character of the
airy and unplastered cabin

winds passed over ridges of mountains
bearing music

the poem of creation every where
passing from hand to hand
gone down the stream of time,
a sort suggestive atmosphere arose

I saw ghosts in every direction
both air and water tinged with blue

place and time changed, and I dwelt
nearer to those parts of the universe

where I lived was as far off as many
a region viewed nightly by astronomers

the day a perpetual morning



What (I)

I am awake and there is a dawn in me.
To be awake is to be alive.
I went to the woods because I know most men

error upon error
clout upon clout

life frittered away by detail
clouds and storms and quick-sands

Men should live and forge days and nights
Why should we live with such hurry and waste of life?



What (II)

Sunday

music and poetry resound along the streets
we perceive that only great and worthy things

have any permanent and absolute existence –
daily life is built on purely illusory foundations

let us spend one day as Nature
looking another way like Ulysses

Paris and London
New York and Boston
and Concord

face to face

life
death

eternity remains
the first letter of the alphabet

my hands rowing somewhere
and here I will begin to mine



*Poems to be read while listening to "Re:Stacks" by Bon Iver, included in the album *For Emma, Forever Ago*, which was inspired by *Walden*.

These poems were written by erasing the chapter "Where I Lived, and I What Lived For" published in *Walden*. For that purpose, the following edition was used: *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers Walden; Or, Life in the Woods The Maine Woods Cape Cod* by Henry David Thoreau. New York: Library of American, 1989.

Poems by José Duarte.

Photographs by Sara Paiva Henriques.

Competing Interests

The authors have no competing interests to declare.

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