

How the Bones Listen

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Natalie Rice

1.

There is a way the grass moves: it's like this,
the human mind grows nervous,

a new saw, a sharp blade
is best with a light touch.

Break language into splinters,
piles of small kindling.

Beside a puddle on the road bear
opens his jaw, swallows meaning.

In dreams, I am bound to earth
but know how to float in a flood,

eyes glint galena,
a bluish-gray metallic luster,

but my mouth is dry,
full of yellowing sedge grass.

2.

The animal-self walks the creek,
eats meat, counts footsteps,

how are your palms so round?
A fist is the size of a heart.

Rose haws are tiny red and beating.
Look, love is here, feel its weight.

Meanwhile, silence eats itself,
starts at the foot and works its way up.

There isn't enough room for speech
in such a dense thicket,

how to walk when your skin is inside out,
when water pours through your clothes?