

The New Criterion

Poems March 2017

Face it

by Ryan Wilson

A silence, bodied like wing-beaten air,
Perturbs your face sometimes when parties end
And, half-drunk, you stand looking at some star
That flickers like a coin wished down a well,
Or when you hear a voice behind you whisper
Your name, and turn around, and no one's there.
You're in it then, once more, the stranger's house
Perched in the mountain woods, the rot-sweet smell
Of fall, the maples' millions, tongues of fire,
And there, whirl harrowing the gap, squint-far,
That unidentified fleck, approaching and
Receding at once, rapt in the wind's spell—
Pulse, throb, winged dark that haunts the clean light's glare—
That thing that you're becoming, that you are.

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This article originally appeared in The New Criterion, Volume 35 Number 7 , on page 29

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