

# CutBank

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## Hearing

Greg Kuzma

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## HEARING

I hear the shins aching.  
I hear the mild cacaphony of tea water  
churning, the lungs of beetles  
breathing on all sides.  
I hear the snore of clocks,  
the sunburn on the leaves of plants  
too long in a window.  
I hear, through the bulging rooms,  
the ineffable muster of old coats,  
the memories of old medallions,  
the break of their wars.  
I hear, from a distance,  
the mutter of towns rising,  
and, from another distance,  
the deliberations of progress  
at the auto plant.  
Now comes on the whisper of the river  
bearing, as if some undercurrent,  
an ebb tide of the sea's regret.  
From the corner I hear  
the old washbasin holding its tears.  
And next to it the reluctant hush  
of the broom, no longer carried forth  
into the antagonistic day.  
Dust sleeps on trinkets, and I hear  
as well the kink in the water pipe.  
There is the bird, situated,  
recalling warm skies.  
The tree around it muted in its voice.  
And now the wind rises to make a speech  
and I can hear the concentration of the audience.

November has brought the snakes.  
Sometimes the scales click and slide.  
Now the whirr of the spinning wheel  
rises up out of the woolen blanket.  
Now the carpet greets my naked feet  
with the surging it associates  
with the vacuum cleaner.  
Pieces of popcorn lie fallen  
between counters, collapsing,  
collapsing.  
Boots, back from the fields,  
exhale in heaps, and the socks  
catch their breaths.  
One might hear, perhaps,  
the greeting the window glass  
offers the light,  
its passage in between the rows  
of onlookers,  
the warmth of its acceptance by wood.

A tire is slowly losing itself.  
Beside it a battalion of autumn leaves  
grows flatter and flatter, like ale.  
Now is the ice age creaking the shadow makes  
descending the wall.  
Now is the sponge forlornly drying  
on the counter top.  
A lightbulb fizzes up in splendid overexcitement,  
then is gone.  
Down at the town hall  
a tremendous barage of eyelids  
greet the tall young lawyer.  
His pace slackens, his cheeks give off  
the bask of gratitude,  
his pant crease snaps like a rope.  
And I can hear the bullet of starlight  
shot a million years ago  
plunk down into my glass of beer.  
And I can hear the ball of string  
hugging itself.  
Now there is the sound of batteries  
oozing their resources.  
Now the little chainsaw of the fly.  
Deep in the pond the bass wavers.  
High over the house a cloud,  
suddenly filled with a rising dust,  
sneezes.  
And there is the music of strings  
plucked once, then set aside,  
still resonant in the sound board.  
The chopping block with its hacks.  
The bandaid cupping the pulse.  
Sometimes, late at night,  
I hear the moon waiting for summer,  
the sleep, deep in the earth,