

Fall 1986

Runner in March Rain

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Recommended Citation

Mathis, Cleopatra (1986) "Runner in March Rain," *CutBank*: Vol. 1 : Iss. 25 , Article 8.

Available at: <https://scholarworks.umt.edu/cutbank/vol1/iss25/8>

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Runner In March Rain

I think now I must earn the land,
earn star and snow and sleep. And wide awake,
earn it past sorry. So when it's too cold
I rise and crack the ice and blow
smoke against the wood and become the one
who runs face-up in sleet
for the needle in the breath of it,
proof in the rasping. I run until the dark
recedes. And make myself
repeat the hill
until the trees take shape,
until the word I run with
fixes this place in time.

What I owe
is the feed-me, the shudder of asking.
I owe my weight, what other
price for the personal:
water no longer water
but the ghostly forms it represents, the past
clotted or released in the road and ditch and air.
Silence is what I owe.
And I can't define it—no more than hilltop,
no more than another mile
will cure the head's black ache,
hatless in the cold,
dumb for the hammer.

I run in a glass house, I beat
this house of wish and doubt
until it crashes, until it shatters.
Here's empty, here's necessary
in the crucial rain-blind panting, the trick
to be still and keep my panic
from the deer in the green-cracked field.
They own the earth rights
to the season breaking.