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## Because You Understand This

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*Because You Understand This*

Everything is watching you—the mockingbird, the wood warbler, the jay, of course, the crawfish frog, carrion beetle, fungus beetle, the hanging fly; everything is watching you, even the thick draw of the tulip, the sunless center of the lidded harebell bud, the underwater witch's nest—crowfoot, bogbean—lungless salamander, the smallest circle in the wound shell of the copper snail. Everything stares. Each ring of the jingle shell, the stalk of milk thistle, the blowing pine-needle shadows reaching forward, forward and back on the stone walk, all are watching you.

Deep in its cave-stream, beneath its clear scale and socket-skin, in its most impenetrable unawareness, the eyeless glass fish attends, and the tailless tenrec and the leaf-nosed bat and the ruby mandrake in the dark on the other side of the earth, even they. And that which possesses only jawbone, naked teeth in the north pasture, chipped femur, scattered vertebra, that which possesses less in the commodious muck of the pondbottom, they too keep you in focus.

Everything, even the blind retina of underground granite, even the ocular roll of the thunderhead, even the solid cold lens of the grey moon. . .

*Pattiann Rogers*