

Winter 1995

## Landscape With At Least Two People In It

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JAMES SCANNELL McCORMICK

LANDSCAPE WITH AT LEAST TWO  
PEOPLE IN IT

But this is the place of no lover and no angel,  
Random and inflammable.

How the terrain lurches toward the shore,  
Willows untwisting their catkins above slabs of old  
breakwater.

In shadows, last ice, brown and pitted as bone.  
Seventy degrees' difference between

Two days. A cottontail doe, stumbling dumb with  
spring  
And young, her coat green along

The ridge of her back. The air-vexed water: vein-  
green, eye-blue. Lip-red  
Withies of Mulberry. Immaculate cerebra of cloud.

Something sacral, elemental: pathetic  
Sun, mud, west wind blowing the lake

Nearly waveless. Ladybug and her midwife's blood,  
Duck and his hangman's hood.

Old gods of threshold, gate and field's  
End. Shore: liminal, littoral, this world

Speaks, if it does, for itself, the old monologue  
Of the land. No musing. No talking back.

*for N.E.*