

CutBank

Volume 1
Issue 46 *CutBank* 46

Article 9

Summer 1996

The Hunger

Patricia Traxler

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Recommended Citation

Traxler, Patricia (1996) "The Hunger," *CutBank*: Vol. 1 : Iss. 46 , Article 9.

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PATRICIA TRAXLER

THE HUNGER

Near land's edge the moon is up
And a hunger's settled in. Do you think
You need me? Nothing lasts here, nothing
Can, not even the vigilant light

Casting things in archetype, inhabiting
Surfaces as if it had the right, as if it
Could bring the relief of meaning
To sand, to amber nipples of seaweed,
Sprawling starfish, the polemics of a hand.

I've heard that in a violent wind
A single strand of straw can pierce a rock
Through some momentary reconfiguration
Of molecules, maybe—matter conspiring with time.
If you touch me now I know I'll always

Need you. Don't touch me now. I've seen
The way the waves rise singly from the body
Of the sea and each bends to the land like
Love's lie, spreading violet and then like love
Retreating to the larger lie of history,

Voluptuous comfort that lets us disappear
Still clutching part of what we held
In hungry light, what we took, what
We knew was real, was permanent.