

# CutBank

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## Songeur

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## ETHAN PAQUIN

### *Songeur*

You look egg shell in brown the stand there on a tree lined street  
as you glance toward a distant park We must stop walking together  
soon for the rain will come back Did you pressurise your special tree  
trunk as I witnessed last autumn When I had no idea who you were  
When I was ripe for dismissal like an anvil a top hat a horse's shoes  
a monad Why did you enter my life Zebra herded out of its travel  
for children's eyes to witnesseth Easter Morning come spilling previous  
night into memry and for all a new salvation a brand of Sunday kitchen  
cast light upon knives with baby's breath handles Why did you Sidewalk  
dusted with the all-time most vicious and abundant pollen the malfunction  
of signage the closed street's lane a solitude is an abstraction not in Paris  
where slow stroll is de rigeur and you weren't with me But you talk Paris  
all the time and what do you think I will be able to do Why do I give in  
What does this sketch this scribbling on the cafe napkin symbolise What  
is a sign or fate or everything for its reason but stones as empty of mass  
of content as a library is as empty of solutions For whom do you watch at dusk  
when the willows frame the stars so theaterifically when mist is life's meaning  
I know you watch You are the kind to do so just look at your eyes' pensee  
and nonscatter They fix on some irresolute past in which all you'd eat alone  
each evening was oats some indeterminate future You'd look good with a smoke  
but you don't do so and to your credit Why do you cause me to dream up scenes  
like these Or like the one in which we trade lines along a bay and the sky is dregs  
like always and the ducks are May's October's ours Swimming hole up north  
nestled aside in a brook on Kinsman Ridge up high It took me several attempts  
to make it up there Once I was turned back by the top of thunder as grievous  
and grief-stricken as a rabbit hutch overgrown with the loss of a past in which  
men bred rabbits for show and for meat for pleasure and for grandsons to learn  
about care and tending And now look at my lump of failure in the guise of paper  
upon which words sprayed contemplate the slow death of morality's tiny and of  
a pain and a depth we've all got and it's what makes sculpture so and it's what  
and it's what makes paintings so And these scenes in which we act out a thing

so untenable and far-removed from any universe we will ever know these eat  
til they are full Do you know the parable of the worm the brick and the ointment  
Neither do I but the three actors sound terrible together like rigid tempera's grip  
on untreated cardboard the egg gone sour and the pigment mixed piss-poorly  
Are you here to help my maudlin drip out a bit faster than usual Look a stone  
it skips the surface of the pond For whom do you watch at dusk from beneath  
the black iron awning of a building abandoned storefront emptied glass intact  
but business vacated For whom How you can stand for thousands of hours  
in silence and only with me is a home in the swallow's unrecognized willow  
The bird returning to a place it's never known but for what its instinct and its  
jam-like neurons tell it You have been here and here you will stay and here  
you will have to make some kind of subsistence view of the meadows the larks  
don't have it so good The grapple and debate Wasn't I somewhere better or  
don't I belong to some other place And then the wind kicks in and the bird  
the bird forgets the trifles and needs to settle in Needs to Do you green  
like a word cut from esoteric notepad rooftop What processes have you  
Look at your shoes they are ocean avenue brown In the brook a churn a sand  
brought down from the high peak and still going to the bottom of the sea  
Is that how the narrative goes Indeed and you keep coming and walking in scenes  
toward me and I am sad for I can't picture the sea at all The thought of the chute  
of brook my favorite mountain range's sonorous but I can't picture the sea.