

Fall 2013

## [letter: on the nature of camping at the margins (5 years later)]

Kevin Phan

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.umt.edu/cutbank>



Part of the [Creative Writing Commons](#)

**Let us know how access to this document benefits you.**

---

### Recommended Citation

Phan, Kevin (2013) "[letter: on the nature of camping at the margins (5 years later)]," *CutBank*: Vol. 1 : Iss. 79 , Article 9.

Available at: <https://scholarworks.umt.edu/cutbank/vol1/iss79/9>

This Poetry is brought to you for free and open access by ScholarWorks at University of Montana. It has been accepted for inclusion in CutBank by an authorized editor of ScholarWorks at University of Montana. For more information, please contact [scholarworks@mso.umt.edu](mailto:scholarworks@mso.umt.edu).

[LETTER: ON THE NATURE OF CAMPING  
AT THE MARGINS (5 YEARS LATER)]

Selection from *My Life with Andy Goldsworthy*

*"You feel as if you've touched  
the heart of the place...  
I am so amazed at times  
that I am actually alive."  
- Rivers & Tides*

Dear Andy,

I've felt loose gravel rock beneath my feet  
like the tide. Undulant tentacles of weeping  
willows have frightened me. I've heard  
the soft complaints of seabirds who dimmed  
the sun. When sleep was shallow I gathered  
no grains of rest. I thought every bulb burst  
was to photograph my shame. To cling,  
Andy, to cling to nothing is what I want  
& love those things that time will bury soon

\*

I am trying to learn to love.  
I am learning to love our sun: a spasmodic filament  
pulsing on a bright red stem. Monks, too,  
I love & blue plums & bay leaves in cheap tins.  
I have committed mantras to my heart  
& sung. If I can love miniature wind storms  
& fresh cow flop odors & wild greens &  
evergreens... Or when I say hello. Hello

spiny dogfish, feather boa kelp, red sea  
urchins, rhinoceros auklets... I know we'll share  
the earth as our true home.

Autumn's eyeless ghosts creak high in flight  
& my supermarket potatoes  
grow eyes & fall asleep. I rest my head  
on a starry blue pillow at the fragile margins  
of autumn & when the wind rocks  
the trees in her arms... I hear each leaf  
unstitch— botched heart shapes  
clatter down & enter the stream.  
I'm entering, too. It's filling up.  
The stream more leaves than stream every moment. I glisten.

Andy, you can come find me here,  
at the river's margin hiding inside  
colorful leaf mounds, the piles gently heaving  
up & down with the storms  
of my sorrow & laughter