

PAM REHM

ALL IT CAN BE

for Whit Griffin

The best questions
dropped out of school

Gratitude like a dog waiting

To protect its silence
a stream tunes itself
over time

Everything earned inside
is hard to describe
like prayer or reverence

I follow the quiet
deeper into my daydream

Sometimes conflicting values are more approachable
than virtue

Human noise reduces bird habitat—
imagine that
happening in reverse

Marvelling is the view with few words

To have to measure up is a sad level
it is beyond our hands

Walking resonates through the feet
up into the mind

But how exactly do I describe to you the joy of finding
a cricket in the bathtub—
like a wave of applause
soaking through me like rain?

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THE SOUND OF THE SPIRIT

for my mother

One must adjust anguish
slowly to oneself
Grow into it
until the comfort is wearable

You do what you have to

Stop to watch the motion
of cold shadows
outside the bedroom window

I know it is more complicated—
this focus on the familiar
cycles of light

But what is the message
the truth expressed
except worn remembrance

The first thing you do
is get dressed

The second
go out on the back porch
and listen

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THE SHADOW OF A MOUNTAIN

Upstream, the current is shallow

Deftly turning them over,
I have observed
rock bottoms
like flowers

The flowing water carries
a leaf on its surface

Face the wind
let it wind through your shirtsleeves

Pine trees hold wings
until they rise and disappear

from your enchantment
Dragonfly jaws work sideways

side by side in a row
The way of engagement is slow

Snow sometimes hides it
in a boy's pockets or

a girl's kite
rising with the sun

So much splendor stuns
the grounds of my acquaintance

with rock bottom

A rocky road through
a picture-perfect day

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WINTER IS CLOSE

Winter is close
and mateless

Night, pensive—
pressed
Eyes, deep glens
of old thoughts

My pillow
a moon vigil

Words fall and root
Words grow glorious bodies

Time's dearest deity
is desire
Desire, fervent and steadfast

Steadfast and eternal