

be careful

By Ed Roberson

i must be careful about such things as these.
the thin-grained oak. the quiet grizzlies scared
into the hills by the constant tracks squeezing
in behind them closer in the snow. the snared
rigidity of the winter lake. deer after deer
crossing on the spines of fish who look up and stare
with their eyes pressed to the ice. in a sleep. hearing
the thin taps leading away to collapse like the bear
in the high quiet. i must be careful not to shake
anything in too wild an elation. not to jar
the fragile mountains against the paper far-
ness. nor avalanche the fog or the eagle from the air.
of the gentle wilderness i must set the precarious
words. like rocks. without one snowcapped mistake.

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