

By W. S. Merwin

Comet of stillness princess of what is over
high note held without trembling without voice without sound
aura of complete darkness keeper of the kept secrets
of the destroyed stories the escaped dreams the sentences
never caught in words warden of where the river went
touch of its surface sibyl of the extinguished
window onto the hidden place and the other time
at the foot of the wall by the road patient without waiting
in the full moonlight of autumn at the hour when I was born
you no longer go out like a flame at the sight of me
you are still warmer than the moonlight gleaming on you
even now you are unharmed even now perfect
as you have always been now when your light paws are running
on the breathless night on the bridge with one end I remember you
when I have heard you the soles of my feet have made answer
when I have seen you I have waked and slipped from the calendars
from the creeds of difference and the contradictions
that were my life and all the crumbling fabrications
as long as it lasted until something that we were
had ended when you are no longer anything
let me catch sight of you again going over the wall
and before the garden is extinct and the woods are figures
guttering on a screen let my words find their own
places in the silence after the animals

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