Time Being
Lakeside, after Leaving Our Youngest at College

Dixie Partridge

Again the curlew calls its name. Where we’ve camped over years, the sky has already distanced itself from the heat press of summer, the lakeshore fluent with ridges only seasons of water can scroll.

What brims toward voice between us does not verge yet into spill. The quiet grows . . . less hollow in mountains than home on the plateau. The shift of shoreline along the north is coded by wind and currents hidden as the braille undersides of fern. As always the forecast will call for our own weather of acclimation.

We’ve not been here in fall. The water flares with beauty edged in iron. Whatever cue the leaves receive, who can tell what will come from their turn toward true colors. Our own veined arms sense we might not come again to this spot where now in slant autumn light what we most notice is a curlew’s cry.

As dusk begins to spread from beneath the trees, we watch a wide-spanned falcon with no wing movement vanish into the next scene.