

The Hike

GENIE ZEIGER

November is the hardest month,
and it's Sunday, the hardest day when
one lives alone, but I am with you.
We enter the wall of woods quietly, the way
we might have entered the room of our
sleeping baby, if we'd had one.
You turn toward me, one finger
pressed over closed lips. Silence is
impossible as dry leaves crackle
beneath our boots, but I synchronize
my steps with yours to keep
the racket down. We reach a ledge
and sit on stones and watch the sun
lower its bright body over the pond.
The beaver, big toothed and
oddly white, climbs onto a tree
limb and begins to chew.
I wish I knew how to love you.
I wish I knew how to do it better.
We pass the binoculars between us
slowly, so the animal won't scare,
but it does, and I am cold.
Let's go, I whisper.
You nod, and I follow you up
the thick hillside, dodging branches,
keeping my eye on that
baggy green knapsack of yours.
I am following, and wanting,
as we come into a clearing,
and there, mirrored in a new
pond, is the early moon,
so full and round
I want to eat it, to share it with you.