

The Carolinian by Charlotte Van Schaack
after Coming Home by Mary Oliver

As I fall into the rumble-hum of the train,
weighed down under my bag,
as I watch the pinkening sky and hope for you
to see it too, weariness floats me.
As I begin to know the landscape and the gaps
in the trees like the spaces between your fingers,
I think of the love the dozen others
on this train car must know,
decades long, stacked end to end.
I think of the wooden piece of porch furniture
I've pulled up to your timeline.
In the blue hour, after all the countryside's
gold is drained, we will try to engrave
one another's form in the hillside
and sand everything else.
This train is taking me back home,
where I am fast forwarding to play the memory.
Where my nerves are jumping the tracks
to get to your car that is waiting
for the moon's silhouette and mine,
to get over what has to be said
between you and me.
The train is breaking,
all of us aboard skittering in our stance of waiting
for the next stop and next after.
I lay my head on crossed arms, falling into
the humble-drum of the rocking car.