

Raymond Carver Was Not Here
Niall Machin

My walk takes me along the canal
In the shadow of pines shielding
The sewage works: no waterfall
Raymond Carver Was Not Here

Nor any rattlers to flight or flee from
Skins of snow geese moving up the bluff
No salmon runs
But the rope swing and the rowing club

No frozen wastes
Or flickering lights of ships moving through the straits
Of Juan de Fuca
Just narrow boats edging slowly into locks

No chance of moose
Or wolves or quail
No rifle cocked and primed
But still within mobile signal, trapped
And too easily traced