

Riverside

Daniel Gustafsson

In autumn, side with rivers; leave
the stagnant streets behind
to stroll and watch the world unwind,
its buffered self now un-
abridged and unencumbered; come
by way of windswept strays
to find your wits outnumbered here
by schools of thoughtless things;
to rinse depleted moods in more-
than-memories of springs.

Though far from where it sprang, on fells
where ridges wrecked the clouds,
and nearly, not quite, flatlined now
among suburban sprawl,
compelled by concrete yokes to crawl
at our pedestrian pace,
this living water without fail
will quicken wearied flesh
and offer fallen leaves a lift,
despatching barks afresh.

Though far from where the rock was cleft,
and little now is left
of that primordial force, it still
cuts clean to reach us here,
through undulating folds of time
and post-historic haze;
the way these stars resurface now,
the gloaming strewn with glints,
to offer something more than hints
of how what's lost from view
will turn its golden thread around
to meet our needs anew;

as these bequests from dying hearths
in blackened halls of space
now, lightyears later, dawn on us
at close of sunless days.