

TWO TREES



Peter McDonald

Weeds upon weeds, sticky with cables and jags,
made the path I was on hardly a path at all,
more a net of stalks and shoots, zig-zags
slowing my pace right down to a crawl
as I picked my way, if way you could call
it, half that morning in a drenched glare
after the hound, and its nose-down long-haul
trek on some urgent but obscure affair
still far from over, and in which I had some share.

Blue dragonflies were switched on by the sun
and clattered into action; warily
I cleared the obstacles one by one,
but knew I was lost; all eyes were on me
(I didn't doubt for a moment these things would see),
and what had felt like silence an hour ago
had turned now to a full cacophony
of things conferring, scuttling, in the know,
an audience perhaps, intent on this one show.

I came to a cleared hollow, where two trees
stood off from one another, bright with moss
that covered them like fur or a disease;
some rain was falling now, while just across
from where the trees put on a greenish gloss
as water caught in drops on their long hair,
I saw myself waiting and at a loss
for where to go, or whether I should dare
the wrong way out; the hound was neither here nor there.

So I stayed alone, at the far end of my luck,
searching the daylight for a way to go,
the path to one side, on the other the stuck
souls of Fraelissa and Fradubio
confirmed in bark and moss, always to grow
apart in separately wordless pain,
able only to move in the wind, with no
eyes to cry out, and just the good rain
for tears, not once to touch each other ever again.