

Leaving the City

Joanna Newsom

Hay, and a clean stall,
and ivy on a garden wall,
and a sign saying Sold,
and an old coat
for the bad cold. I believe in you.
Do you believe in me?
What do you want to do?
Are we leaving the city? On the black road,
through the gold fields,
while the fields are plowed,
towards what we are allowed...
The bridle bends in idle hands
and slows our canter to a trot.
We mean to stop, in increments, but can't commit.
We post and sit, in impotence:
the harder you hit, the deeper the dent.
We seek our name.
We seek our fame, and our credentials
(paned in glass, trained to master incidentals).
Bleach our collar, leech our dollar from our cents:
the longer you live, the higher the rent. Beneath the pale sky,
beside the red barn,
below the white clouds,
is all we are allowed.
Here, the light will seep,
and the scythe will reap,
and spirit will rend, in counting toward the end.
In December of that year,
the word came down that she was here.
The days grew shorter.
I was sure, if she came 'round,
I'd hold my ground. I'd endure.
But they'd alluded to a change
that came to pass,
and Spring, deranged,
weeping grass and sleepless,
broke herself upon my windowglass. And I could barely breathe, for seeing
all the splintered light that leaked her fissures,
fleeing, launched in flight:
unstaunched daylight, brightly bleeding,
bleached the night with dawn, deleting, in that high sun,
after our good run,

when the spirit bends
beneath knowing it must end. And that is all I want here:
to draw my gaunt spirit to bow
beneath what I am allowed.
Beneath what I am allowed.
Song Discussions is protected by U.S. Patent 9401941. Other patents pending.

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