

EMILY STRAUSS

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Sleeping Out

yes, right here on the ground  
remove a few twigs, an errant  
pebble, watch for ant hills

lay out plastic and a nice pad  
spread your sleeping bag  
gather some essentials

water  
flashlight  
sweater  
(remove your shoes)

now listen  
and watch  
unnamed planet whirl of stars darting  
satellite crescent of moon late purple  
glow over the lake geese rustling  
leaves rustling tiny night feet  
of mice quail settling nightjars astir  
bats begin swooping down almost  
graze your head up again following  
moths flutter against the outline  
of cottonwoods drifting white fluff  
on the water

watch  
listen

this unknown order of night  
stepping down to cover  
your sleep lightly

the dew settles at dawn  
brief damp breath against  
the yellowing sky, the rest

forgotten, Venus now setting  
the first warblers call in the marsh



## ABOUT EMILY STRAUSS

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Emily Strauss received her MA in English from San Francisco State University and is now a semi-retired instructor living in Sunnyvale, California. Her poems have appeared in a variety of venues, including *The Sunflower Collective*, *Four Ties Lit Review*, *SNReview*, *Smoky Blue Literary and Arts Magazine*, and *Hobo Camp Review*.

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