

Imprinting

*You were aimed from birth*

William Stafford

I. Migration

For long hours  
it is only roofs,  
a backlit yard flickering  
or a basketball net  
reaching to snare the night.  
Streets meet, cross,  
thin to single grey threads.  
Trees take over,  
swell to canopies.  
A pool has been calling since birth,  
its coordinates tattooed on DNA.  
Even though a road draws a noose around the shore,  
houses perch on the water's lip,  
the gander knows this lake,  
lands feet first, calls to the flock,  
beacons them home.

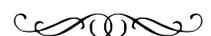
II. Racine

The town has  
collapsed in the center,  
strip malls spreading north and south.  
Once you see the scarred Piggly Wiggly,  
you know your way.  
You follow the old bus route,  
wind past the park and cemetery,  
recreate the rides of summer:  
    your grandmother close beside you,  
    her purse between her feet,  
    in crimped hands, she holds a paper sack—  
    apples, Wonder Bread, a waxed envelope of lunch meat.

You drive without hesitation  
to the house on the cul-de-sac,  
look for the window  
where you pressed  
your nose against the glass  
to watch your grandfather,  
lunch pail in hand,  
walk to the tannery down the street.

### III. Lakestruck

An accident led you here.  
You went to see another frozen lake,  
to walk among the ice volcanoes,  
listen to the floes bump and crack.  
You did not know  
Superior waited  
deep-hearted,  
battering its song  
against black rocks.  
You have been pulled in  
like trout  
from the Au Train  
or the Chokolay,  
drawn to deeper waters.  
Your breath syncs to the sound of the surf.



## ABOUT JANEEN PERGRIN RASTALL

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Janeen Pergrin Rastall lives in Gordon, Michigan, population 2. Her poetry has appeared in *The Raleigh Review*. She has poetry forthcoming in *The Nassau Review*, *Midwestern Gothic*, *Storm Cellar*, and *The Way North: Collected Upper Peninsula New Works* (Wayne University Press).

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