

SARAH ANN WINN

Nature, Chrome Painted

drowned in haze, the surface
unweathered flows,
water hollows valleys, and leaves
dry lakes, steep
dark and bitter, with thin lies
over- vegetating. Saline traces.
Sculpture of storms scar past,
essays in miniature the terrible canyon
which will last. This is a country
for maddening, a soil rolling
frost calms
the dust whirling. No rain or violence.
A land of rivers love once
visited.
Come back, little told.

ABOUT THE POEM & AUTHOR

“Nature, Chrome Painted” is an erasure of a page from *The Land of Little Rain* by Mary Hunter Austin (Houghton Mifflin 1903).

About the poem and process of creating it, Sarah says: “I love the way erasures can bring your own experiences and outlook from a piece which seems as solid as a block of stone before you begin carving. In grad school, I took a class called ‘Creative Processes’ where we examined commonly held perceptions about making a piece of art and being an artist. We experimented with ways around/through perceptions which didn’t serve the art itself: the idea of the lone artist, the idea of a finite number of ideas, the idea of creative block. One of the experiments showed us how even snapping photos could open up new paths in writing. By looking at a set, it was easy to see why a certain photo would stand out as having a ‘mood.’ I didn’t have any idea when I started erasing this source text, a public domain book found on Wave Books’ website, that a poem about loss would emerge.”

Sarah Ann Winn is the author of *Portage* (Sundress Publications 2015), *Field Guide to Alma Avenue and Frew Drive* (Essay Press 2016), and *Haunting the Last House on Holland Island, Fallen into the Bay* (Porkbelly Press 2016). Her work has appeared in *Found Poetry Review*, *Nashville Review*, *Tupelo Quarterly*, *Hayden’s Ferry Review*, and *The Massachusetts Review*, and she serves as the associate poetry editor for Zoetic Press. She received an MFA in creative writing from George Mason University and currently lives in Manassas, Virginia. She is teaching poetry workshops for senior citizens at a local community center this fall and is the founder and organizer of Poet Camp, a roving residency for women writers. Online at *Bluebird Words* (bluebirdwords.com).

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