

Water Music: An Anniversary Poem

Some streams are always in a hurry: they
noise their turbulence long before you see
them arch their backs and foam at each delay
the rocks toss in their laps, and if a tree
stands in the way, they chew its roots until
it buckles down on them. This checks their shrill
torrent, but soon, every leaf scrubbed away,
a scored log rolls in the cacophony.

Not so this stream, which dallied. Only force
of gravity won it from its curve of ground.
Willows leaned towards the steady watercourse
where fanned leaves stroked it, stirring with the sound
of rain, but the stream reflected on the trees
bars of such liquid brilliance that to trace
their wellspring you must look until you found
water and light issuing from one source.

Fanning out like growth rings, concentrically
but fast, two circles furrowed the stream, bound
each for the other, yet waves of music free
of gravity or water never wound
so lightly in and out as, wave and shore,
each circle overlapped the other's core,
and where the stream drew through a loop of tree,
they grew one ring, one sound, one flowing round.

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