

And So She Walked

*A walk in words based on a walk through a tunnel
in the winter of 2014 on the island of Gotland
that Susanne Kriemann told me about.*

By Maria Barnas

And so she walked with ill determination
and all the apprehension her bones allowed

her steady feet somehow still trampling
as if belonging to a steadfast stranger.

And she walked in repetition only divided by time
from those who had gone before her.

And she walked because that is what she had
always been good at, along the branches

of tall trees, waiting for trains and boats
and aeroplanes that turned into angry clouds

in which her mind wandered off
because there was not much else to do, really.



And she walked through an evening, dark
in a monochrome, near perfect way

that could only be attained by nature,
she assumed. And she reminded herself

that nature bears no grudges.
The night could not care less.

Nature's apathy is more volatile
than the opacity of a child's recurring dream.

(How many times can you suffocate?
the child asked no one in particular.)

But how the grass lures and hisses.
How the night snatches. We see ice drifting off

in shapes you might call baroque with multiple
viewing angles in an eclectic

and seemingly incompatible range of recoiling
images and waves, oh elaborate sea.



And she walked in evening darkness that slowly
loosened its grip as she allowed indifference

to seep into its place. She saw what this decreasing

darkness could mean and trod lighter,

losing and loosening imagination like hair
from an elastic band, relief falling onto her

shoulders. And she touched damp walls
that did not suffer and she scratched

limestone walls that did not care.
So she walked in a world that was evening

out under her gaze and she could only move
forward - or could she -

and she finally reached a place
that was die and body in one

untouched and filled to the rim. Buoyant with life
and bright intention. There,

because it exists in its most radical form:
perfect and imperfect, with its lacking within.



And so she walks, not knowing if she causes
image or if she is an image in the process

of being developed, moving through a tunnel
that might be a camera. She is an eye, passing

perception, or is she blurring imagery
with movement and thought?

Failing to reach a decision or insight
- for who knows what foundering

precedes the hesitancy to reach any conclusion -
she walks beyond strategies and scorched fields

of vision and she walks
in full view as she moves along.

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*Cette roublarde a évité la moule de la société
Elle s'est coulée dans le sien propre.
D'autres, ressemblantes, partagent avec elle l'anti-mer.
Elle est parfaite.*
- La moule, Marcel Broodthaers