My Hollows

by Sam Rasnake

— for Gary Snyder

Let me say these words now, in the light, before you go — Wind across the North Cascades is unbearably quiet this morning

I never hitchhiked a thousand miles of summer highway, put up hay, painted a boat, never stood beside footstones in a garden near Kyoto, but

I have seen axe handles swim wide rivers that couldn't be crossed, but the handles didn't know they couldn't swim, so they did, swimming on words — big ones, small ones — words so full of their own truth I couldn't help but believe