

robin

by Glynnis Eldridge

(v 1: I picked up a robin yesterday. It was red and puffed and in the middle of the road in front of the car on the way to the grocery store. I put on the brakes and turned on the flashing red light to signal my stop. I picked the bird up and moved it to the side of the road.)

(v 2:

On the way to the grocery store yesterday there was a robin in the road. I stopped the car and picked the bird up with my hands. I put it in the bushes and got back in the car. On the way to the grocery store C and I fought about the bird. I shouldn't have done it, he said. It was better off dead, someone should have broken its neck, you should have just stomped on it's head, let it die painlessly, instead of leaving it out for a hungry cat or coyote. Which would you prefer; a painless death in which you were hit by a car or having your stomach ripped out and bleeding to death whilst feeling your body be eaten?

In the car we listened to suicide is painless and in the grocery store we couldn't talk. He handed me the grocery basket, bought some beer and went back to the car. Returning to the car twenty minutes later with lettuce, bananas and brownie mix, strawberries, ice cream, and a bell pepper, he put half a snickers in my mouth and I say the bird thing upset me and again we are fighting. As we approach where we found the bird and the bushes where we left it, I reach for a flashlight that has run out of batteries. This all happens the night of the blood moon.

I am scanning my memory for people I know who are gentle with me. An escape mechanism. My grandmother sends a message to my phone asking me about pot and I lie and tell her I smoke every other week.

A few days ago I lost my capacity to recognize what I was seeing. On my drive over here this evening a hooded figure followed close behind the car.

The recording of the man who talks about time and place and identity and recognition of that identity talks about coming from nowhere in 1991, a recording that sounds like 1951. You are recognizing the distance between time and places and where you were in 1991 and how far you are now and how in some way you have followed his advice or something like it and pushed yourself into accidents.)

