

The Scripture of the Mountain

by John Olson

Abstractions excite me. I can't say why. There are treasures in the mountains. Extremities and peaks. Romantic cures and the curious juice of blackberries. The truth and authority of rock. It feels impersonal, and tilts into eccentric configurations. What is purpose? What is ambition? I'm enthralled by the interior of a foxglove. I'm ravenous for emptiness of mind. Wrinkles flower like consonants on the vowels of the face. The ultimate presence is sunlight. I live in the acuity of a moment scratched in ice. The vertebrae of a ram. The audacity of crickets. I venerate the integrity of the waterfall. Not because it is beautiful because it is naked in the rain. And falls. And falls. And falls. And explodes into horses at the bottom. I am an amalgam of blood and bone. Life is an enigma. Pain and pleasure are twins. As soon as one piece fits, another piece has the right image but the wrong shape. Sexuality is the greatest mystery of all. Talk turns to the folding of sheets. The secrets of the blood writhe in the shadows of a nocturnal emission. The ghosts of a dead language arrive in a limousine of ice and denim. Pink cuticles shine at the tips of tan fingers. Have you ever had a feeling too nebulous for words? The mind is a metaphor. Pronoun sawdust. Meat in a skull. Depth is sometimes revealed at the surface. The shine of a word lyrical with curves and protuberances. The scripture of the mountain is moss. It is held together in uneasy equilibrium and translated by the fingers. The message is simple: buy the cereal for the cereal, not the toy. The key to success is in wearing the right kind of camouflage. And letting the words go to extremes. Confused, dirty, subtle and veined. Keith Richards on lead guitar. Heat and bone pleading redemption. Sharp and hard and cutting. The way a knife sinks into meat. The way a river meanders to the end of the horizon and touches the sky.

