

Notes on Paper

a poem



by Damon Falke

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You play for yourself first, of course. You know you're the primary audience for yourself, and I just don't like to hear superfluous things, and I hope there aren't too many elements that are superfluous in what I do.

-Bill Evans

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When October Comes

I know all the roads that lead into town,
Even after these years away.
The way I find them here
In the shadows of my old hopes still,
In the unexpected gifts of earlier days,
In the taste of some things left in the air
Where so much has become once.
Once we caught twelve pigmy rattlers
In and around a sandstone butte.
Once we hunted arrowheads with an old woman
Who could name all our mountains.
Once we shared a river camp with an old man
Who came west in a wagon.
I keep them in a loneliness
And in times we could never save.
I look for them in those places
That were never ours alone.
The bowling alley. The dump road. The schools.
Our private lives hid among those open doors.
What will we do, I ask, without knowing
The what or the how anymore.
Maybe this is why I ride in silence now,
During these days and mostly this way
When watching the streetlights flash
As if they could say something else
Of why we come and go, we come and go.

