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Painted into a Corner

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Painted into a Corner

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I.

Have your emptiness
And let it hold you at night
Too close for comfort;

Let it sweat on your skin
Underneath a fleece blanket
And steal the t-shirt covered pillow.

In the middle of a bad dream
Have it call out for help,
But there is no one there;

It is emptiness.
Go back to sleep. No one
Will be saved by this idea—

It is a meaningless echo
Off a wordless canyon of
Crumbled carved rock.

II.

I should have seen the fence being born
and the pink ribbon in your painting,
not as a sign of love for me but of remembrance
to the day we sat under the shaded oak tree
and I vented too much and listened too little.

Now I see that you remembered
the pink plastic ribbon hugging the present
perennial and painted it flailing in the wind—
a clear signal for me to help, to help, to help!
I did not see your feelings as separate from me.

Now there is trash underwater, a deep turquoise blue,
and the sky is all fenced in except one spot
where perhaps you have not finished painting.
Perhaps you will paint that in too and then
there will be no more reaching you.