Walking Out in All Weather

Dixie L. Partridge
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Sky darkens but you detour from the familiar—a route so level you can read while you walk if that seems a better reach toward some new solace.

Wordsworth first after all these years, then Stafford, for old friendly lines with their something different being true. It’s as though secreted between stanzas will be a passageway you missed, and you should take it.

The detour path thick with green winds until you lose direction, end at a leafless, misshapen tree. Here you sit against the trunk wondering if insects killed it and will be carried home in seams and cuffs. Somewhere in this small volume, Stories and Storms, you remember how shadows once dull turned into many hues.

Now from an overgrown side lane: the bright, bright bounce of light off an old Datsun mirror as you start again, sun cracking thick cloud for only an instant, and wind starting up, forcing you to lower your head, lean forward, eyes watering.

And instead of turning home you stick it out into rising dust for another mile, as though to postpone for the length of this struggle some darker thing from moving forward.

—Dixie Partridge