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Traveling without Reservation

Dixie Partridge

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Traveling without Reservation

On a backroad, the only vacancy, as last light evaporated from tops of trees, we paused to look and listen anxiously about, to know the land a little before we slept. Forest birds had taken cover in the tented places, long needles and bark floors padding the silence. From the ground, darkness came on, stirrings of night animals sure of their way reaching us—imagined or real.

We fled to ourselves, places taut and pulsing, sleep a scant coverlet for senses that longed for release . . . to touch home. Morning would bring a wet yellow light through the green. It would be the world again. But for now, we would think of words unspoken in our ritual living—

\[
\text{hair moss} \quad \text{bloodroot} \\
\text{lichen} \quad \text{heartwood}
\]

Underground rivers and caverns would become the archives of being. For this night, we would dream and breathe in another history.

—Dixie Partridge