



Painting by Sue Davis www.vachonarts.com

Listening to moss

for Judith, i.m.

I take a blindfold, lie down and listen
to a half-globe of star-green star moss,
hear dense hairs ease up, and reflecting
leaf tips brace, catch narrow fronds sly
slowing the air, slow air lip a long leaf
and I just couldn't remember humanness
even though or especially because she died
and I wasn't there, nor she, all so very late
while the star-green star moss sips dew
in the breath-seed between air and rock
as if in death all were air and moss and fresh
floating love and death itself dissolved
until the powder-spores are lifted high,
full-free on breezy swirls and vortices.

From *Inland*

Kay Syrad writes:

"Given the current ecological crisis, I have been trying to face away from the self, adopting an approach influenced by the eco-scholar Donna Haraway's idea of 'being with' and 'making with' the non-human. The self continues to intervene, of course, but perhaps with greater humility."

Swans in a field

two loop-necked birds
a strip of green
between them

nestled but alert
beaks reaching

I see them through glass
silent feathers

not far
from the stream

they arise from chaos
as traces of light

as movement
in the quiet green

small in the wide green

I am dazzled

I inhabit their emptiness

Bird of paradise flower

Strelizia reginae

The slender double-gold-collared sunbird – a small passerine with a long arc'd bill – leaves its purse-shaped lace-webbed nest hung from a thin branch and darts down for the nectar of a crane lily bird of paradise flower, balances its seven grams on the petal-leaf spathe and let-looses all the powdery pollen, dusting its amethyst-orange breast and feet, and flash-flies in the fireheart-heat of the Western Cape to the next set of yellow-red and bright blue tongues in horizontal inflorescences – the envy of Charlotte, George the Third's botanist wife from Mecklenburg-Strelitz, an English queen of African descent.

Peter Abbs is Poetry Editor for *Resurgence & Ecologist*. www.peterabbs.net
Patricia Helen Wooldridge, *Sea Poetics*, Cinnamon Press, 2018
Kay Syrad, *Inland*, Cinnamon Press, 2018