

HOLE IN THE MOUNTAIN BY GRAHAM TREDWELL

There's a hole deep in the mountain on the far side of the tacks, the far side from the river where you once lay. The leaves are tinted now; the yellows, reds and orange's capture the stale afternoon sun, stenciling a silhouette of the hanging leaves on the floor of the overgrown forest. I can hear the leaves crunch beneath my feet, hear them crackle in the distant wind, how I wish you could hear them crackle.

489.1, that's where it happened, that fall day thirteen years ago where our eyes first met. There was the mine, the track, the railroad car; and the lonely coyote lurking in the depth of the forest.

The snows will be coming soon and the twilight gneiss walls of the canyon will be covered in a virgin blanket of white, crystals sparkling in the cloudy sun, snow consuming the tales of that fall day thirteen years ago.

The evidence will be gone, hidden beneath yet another winter, masking the truth, the truth of me and you, the truth of how our eyes first met. The river will continue to flow, the bears and whistle pigs will hibernate in the shelter of the canyon's caves, the deer and elk will trot circles in the snow, and the lonely coyote will call to the moon, while the guilty in charge, warming their noses by the fire in their homes, will hide their guilt in bows and ribbons beneath the tree, eternally locking you in your synthetic tomb of transparent disillusion, your tomb deep within the mountain.

Today, as many days before, I watch you walk the banks of the lonely river, gliding by the muddy footprints in your mind. Footprints; where you once ran from the wreck, where you pulled your comrades from the doom of the river. I see in your wishful eyes the blessing to cry, the blessing to feel the mud, the water and wind, the blessing to know my name. You stand by the river where I first met you, where I buried your body on the far side of the tracks, in the hole, deep within the mountain.

A candle flickers in the corner of the room where the skins and hides rest on a crooked hook on the far wall. The last of the suns light slips beyond the confines of the canyon, shadows stalking the departure of the day, as I, through the frozen glass window of my cabin, see you mouth a mournful cry at the corner of your lips, stumbling home to your hole in the mountain. Asking for the answers to such madness.

The madness of the moon to which I, as a prisoner in ceremony, Howl!