

A Study of Traffic

James Ragan

The clouds have unmooned the hills,
and in the distance, riding the fog's
wide current of a headlight
where one can barely tell
the mind is going or coming back,
a woman walks her hands until they bleed.
She binds the charred board
of the armbone, pricks a bead
from the red grain of her skin's leather,
as if with touch she will regain trust
for the want in things to breed together.
She is old as the cold that keeps her
veins inhabited, with scarcely cloth
to hold the sunlight in her lap.
She has lost the god that goes unnamed,
the blanket of her memory unraveling
all the fears she quilts into coherent thought.
Look into her eyes. Deeper.
Follow the footsteps through her mind.
A light will clear a path into a greater traffic,
the revving of imaginings now a whispering dot,
a car beam steadied to the ground, a slug
hurdling a needle she can no longer find.