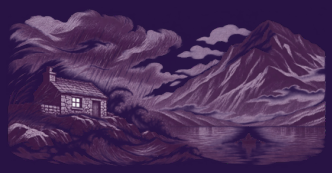
WITH BIRDS YOU'RE NEVER LONELY



Raymond Antrobus

WHAT HAPPENS? A noisy cafe prompts memories of a forest, hearing, trees and a woman's inherited knowledge of birds.

BIG IDEA **A more attentive relationship with nature unsettles narrow assumptions about hearing, solitude and belonging.**

FOUR EVIDENCE FRAGMENTS · ZOOM IN, THEN EXPLAIN

"slam"

Onomatopoeic verb

The cafe's noise feels abrupt and invasive.

"silence"

Reconsidered noun

A quiet soundscape need not mean emptiness or disconnection.

"sturdiness"

Abstract noun

The trees' physical assurance becomes something the speaker envies.

"family"

Metaphor

Urban trees are understood through the relationships their setting prevents.

FORM

Free verse presented in couplets; movement between cafe, forest and remembered conversation joins contrasting kinds of listening.

CONTEXT

Antrobus writes from a D/deaf perspective. The poem also values Maori knowledge transmitted between generations.

COMPARE IT WITH…

Lines Written in Early Spring: attention to nature. Homing: knowledge passed between generations.

VOICE, TONE & FEELINGS · FOLLOW THE SHIFTS

Cafe and recollection

OVERLOADED AND DISTRACTED

Ordinary machinery makes hearing difficult while the speaker thinks about a different soundscape.

Forest and hearing aids

ATTENTIVE AND QUESTIONING

Switching sound off reveals a form of presence that does not depend on audible noise.

Woman and London trees

CONNECTED, THEN SORROWFUL

Inherited knowledge of birds leads to concern for isolated trees in an urban world.

FULL POEM: use your anthology. Evidence fragments are prompts for close reading.

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