

## Anecdotes

Joanna Newsom

Sending the first scouts over,  
back from the place beyond the dawn:  
Horse, bear your broken soldier,  
eyes frozen wide at what went on.

And Time, in our camp, is moving  
as you'd anticipate it to.  
But what is this sample proving?  
Anecdotes cannot say what Time may do.

I kid with Rufous Nightjar,  
when our men are all asleep:  
"It ain't about how rare you are,  
but how hard you are to see.  
Take, you and me—"

"When are you from?" said he,  
in our blind of winter leaves,  
as we sighted out their fliers  
in the grayscale of the night  
and fumbled on the bare ground  
to bury round landmines,  
while the dew lay down and dried.

We signal Private Poorwill, when morning starts to loom:  
"Pull up from your dive!"  
till we hear the telltale Boom,  
too soon—  
hotdogging loon, caught there  
like a shard of mirror in the moon!

Now they've stopped giving orders,  
but i follow anyway,  
laying in our state of torpor,  
waiting out the day  
while the dew burns away.

Rushing, tearing, speeding home:  
bound to a wheel that is not my own,  
where round every bend i long to see  
temporal infidelity.

All along the road, the lights stream by.  
I want to go where the dew won't dry.  
I want to go where the light won't bend—  
far as the eye may reach—nor end.

But inasmuch as that light is loaned,  
and, insofar as we've borrowed bones,  
must every debt now be repaid  
in star-spotted, sickle-winged night raids,  
while we sing to the garden, and we sing to the stars,  
and we sing in the meantime,  
wherever you are?

In the folds and the branches,  
Somewhere, out there,

I was only just born into open air.  
Now hush, little babe.  
You don't want to be  
Down in the trenches,  
Remembering with me,

Where you will not mark my leaving,  
And you will not hear my parting song.  
Nor is there cause for grieving.  
Nor is there cause for carrying on.

And daughter, when you are able,  
Come down and join! The kettle's on,  
And your family's round the table.  
Will you come down, before the sun is gone?