

Gunn Hill

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Given time, a place becomes a thing
small enough to hold in memory's grip,
strong enough to struggle free. Frightened

and beautiful, it looks over its shoulder
as it bolts away. Years ago, I walked uphill
in snow here, counting the days

until Christmas with each footstep. I hid
with boys, stained my clothes
in the wet grass, ran home with leaves

in my hair. I left my children
asleep on quilts as I wandered deep
along purple-orange swales

to pick berries. I have tasted the onion sting
of weeds here, worn a crown of clover.
Many times, I've slipped a hand into my pocket

expecting to find a dry petal or a stone, forgetting
that nothing rises from cindered kisses
or crystallizes out of snowmelt.