

Appalachia

Volume 65
Number 1 *Winter/Spring 2014: At Large*

Article 22

2014

Stebbin's Gulch

Mary Oliver

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Recommended Citation

Oliver, Mary (2014) "Stebbin's Gulch," *Appalachia*: Vol. 65: No. 1, Article 22.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.dartmouth.edu/appalachia/vol65/iss1/22>

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Stebbin's Gulch

by the randomness
of the way
the rocks tumbled
ages ago

the water pours
it pours
it pours
ever along the slant

of downgrade
dashing its silver thumbs
against the rocks
or pausing to carve

a sudden curled space
where the shining fish
splash or drowse
while the kingfisher overhead

rattles and stares
and so it continues for miles
this bolt of light,
its only industry

to descend
and to be beautiful
while it does so;
as for purpose

there is none,
it is simply
one of those gorgeous things
that was made

to do what it does perfectly
and to last,
as almost nothing does,
almost forever.

Mary Oliver

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