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Climbing Brace Mountain

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Climbing Brace Mountain

Same route, but every year more strain.
The mountain stays, we change.
Gravity is the war that no one wins,
yet all must fight.
But rarely so brazenly declared
as here today. You, with your bum knee,
winded from the start, and me,
in Birkenstocks and socks,
stumbling up the leaf-slick chutes,
then scrambling higher, steeper,
clinging to low-hung branches,
gouged-out roots, bracing against
crevassed faces of Taconic gneiss.
Up and up through all the yellow halls
of autumn to the leaf-blown heights,
then out to that bare, bedrocked knoll
where the thicket opens its fist,
and light speaks to light without end.

Richard Schiffman

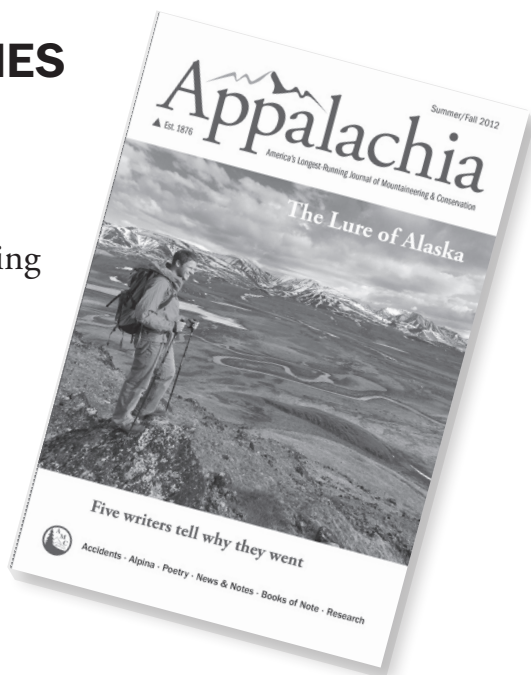
RICHARD SCHIFFMAN is a freelance journalist whose work appears regularly in the *Huffington Post* and elsewhere. His poems have been published in a wide variety of journals. He is currently working on the manuscript for his first book of poetry.

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