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Cormorant With Swimmers

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Cormorant With Swimmers

The ocean writes its soft babble on blue silence
quieting all other voices
turning the light under water to a trembling silken jelly.
We swim in a cormorant's aquamarine eye.

Fifteen feet—not an unfriendly distance—
he keeps, stitching a semicircle around our path
with dives as fluid as the sea itself, the black feathered neck
as if formed of water, bird one with water, water his truth.

Ten meters down, no tiny fish concealed
in a rocky crevice of circumstance
is safe from the hooked beak that scrapes and snags
with the terrible innocence of chance in a random world.

Later four cormorants bob in a circle on the waves
sociably, like old friends playing bridge,
as if their image as lone foragers through chilling winds
were a joke gently played on the human beholder.

Stephanie Kraft

STEPHANIE KRAFT is a former newspaper reporter, now a translator of Polish literature. She lives in Amherst, Massachusetts, and has often visited Nova Scotia's Cape Breton Island and the Bird Islands. Her poems have appeared in *Christian Century*, *The Prose Poem Project*, *Dappled Things*, *Cold Mountain Review*, and *Sky Island Journal*.

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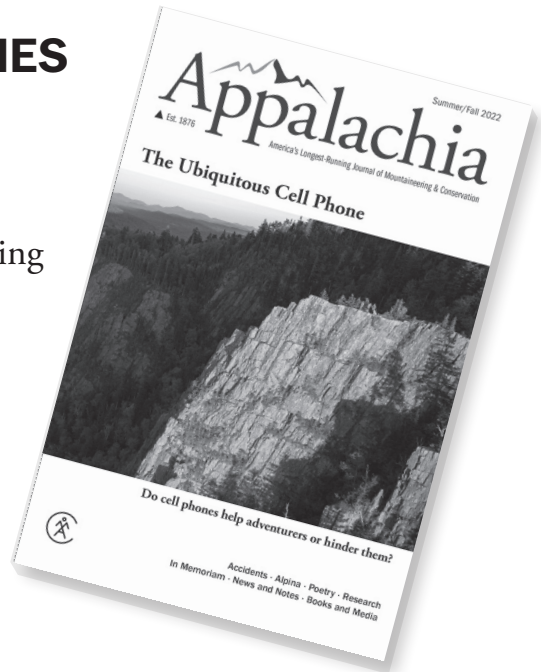
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