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In Big Pine Basin

Marcyn Del Clements

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In Big Pine Basin

Cassiopeia hitches her way over the mountain ridge.
I lie in my down bag in the moon's shadow,
behind Two Eagle Peak, watching meteors

die across the evening sky, some so close
I can almost hear their passage. Earlier, at dusk,
when I stopped to share my trout catch,

the young artists across the lake
wanted to know why I wasn't afraid—
a woman alone in the backcountry.

I keep my own timetable: packing and moving
when I want; following cairns to the glacier; identifying
flowers along the trail; skinny-dipping in a hidden

spring. Tonight from my camp, a profound quiet, the only
sounds, the rush of the melting glacier a quarter mile away,
and from my neighbors far across the dark water—muted snores.

Marcyn Del Clements

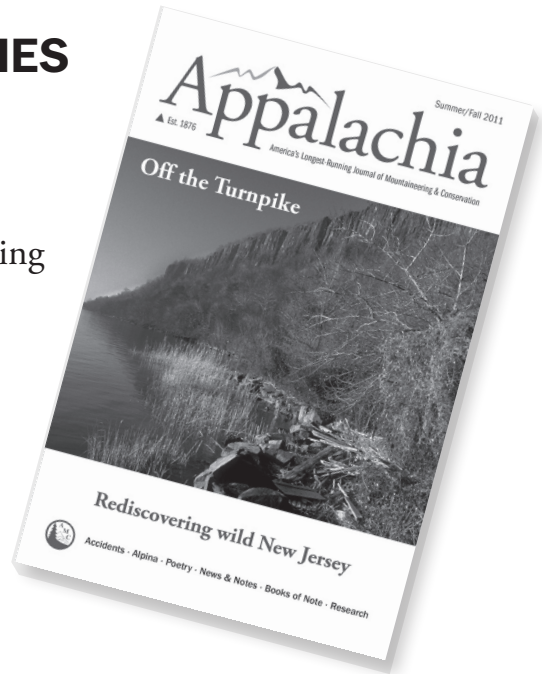
MARCYN DEL CLEMENTS and her husband, Richard, live in Claremont, California. Marcy's work has appeared periodically in *Appalachia* since 1994. Her trip to Big Pine Basin, in California's Sierras, was her first extended solo backpack; she visited a loop of six lakes in an extinct glacial cirque.

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