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Porcupine Mountains

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Porcupine Mountains

Hiking the rainy October trails
we make our way through
yellow maple and oak and ghosts
of an older forest—humps
and ridges that were tip-ups
and trunks, stumps of many arm-span
girths, fallen to loam and silence
beneath the earth.

We walk the loop around
the Lake of the Clouds, twenty miles
lost in mist, make our way
back long after dark through hemlock
and pine to find the shards
of the quarter-moon scattered
in the east-running waves
of Mirror Lake, wade out
to meet them, easing
our blistered feet.

Jim salves his poison ivy rash,
John and Anka find their bunk,
Will and Jack read, I write,
our world alive in the flicker
of firelight on varnished log walls,
the ache of the muscles
that brought us here.

Outside,
the owls listen for mice
in the forest and vanished forest
stretching for miles.

Robin Chapman

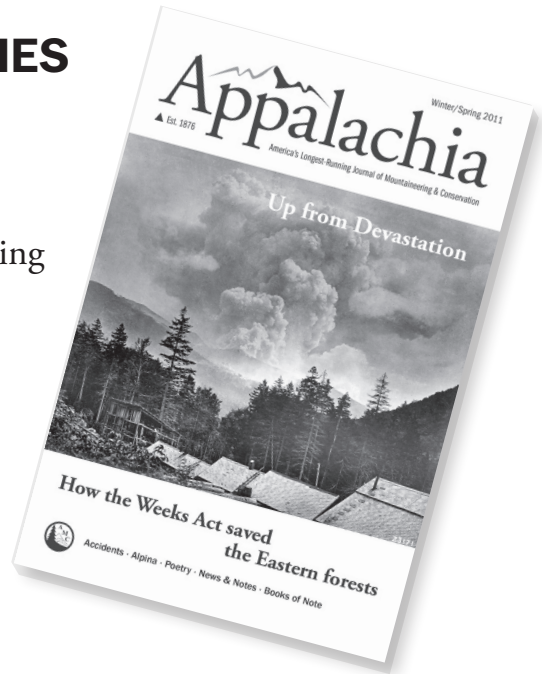
ROBIN CHAPMAN is the author of six poetry books, most recently *Abundance* (Cider Press, 2009), which won the Cider Press Review Book Award. She is recipient of *Appalachia's* 2010 Poetry Prize. Her poems have appeared recently in *The Antigonish Review*, *Dalhousie Review*, and *Prairie Schooner*, among other journals.

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