

*Spring Moon Over a Valley*

*Many times, these things seemed recently abandoned, as if the owner was just around the corner.*

—Gabriella Soto, “What Migrants Leave Behind”

i. Sun & Drag Tires/Spring Moon

A thing is a meeting, assembly, council, discussion. Is an act, deed, event, body, being, creature. An appointed time. Shoes and clothing, tire, holy cards, a water jug. Today Bill and Marty and I saw shoes left at the side of a road in Nogales. And deep under brush, in the desert, black clothes in the shape of having left or having been left in a hurry, sleeves and pantlegs open or closed, a garbage bag, plastic jug painted black so it doesn't shine at night. In a nearby wash, abandoned on chains, a drag tire—Border Patrol trucks pull tires to smooth the dirt so anyone who walks or drives there afterwards will be newly detectable. Marty had heard that. Now it is night, the moon is full, down in the valley a ground star is what happens when at a certain distance two headlights merge—Bill says it's probably Border Patrol.

ii. Full Moon & Cottonwoods

But I don't mean the moon is not a thing. A case at law, a stretch of time. The moon will matter to anyone trying to cross

but not to the piles of belongings out there letting go of themselves, things marooned, things by which to be forgotten.

This moon looks bare, without addition, blankly complete in itself. Cottonwoods stand along the course of what is now

an underground river, nothing changes places with anything else, an owl calls or sings or whatever the word for it is

and the word for it doesn't matter, camouflage by holding still is still the oldest trick in the book that isn't a book,

the wind blowing over the grass, or the absence of voices.

iii. Full Moon & Deck

Down there, trees in the valley, scrub, the ups and downs of anyone walking in a full moon dark that secrets all things left behind, artifacts bearing salt, names, phone numbers, gauze, a doll, a cell phone thrown into a long-gone river to quiet it. Doesn't darkness pull itself down to the ground and then there are no hummingbirds at the feeder, this deck seems to have traveled away with us, or the dark has taken them or has taken their hunger. The moon won't show itself later in any photograph the way it shows right now to us its moment of rising over the valley. Moonlight must make passage easier, but also announces anyone passing by. Up here, we watch as from the deck of a ship—a bridge—a layer of clouds—

iv. Moon & Voices (Javier Zamora's, Molly Hennessy-Fiske's, Pablo Neruda's, Fiske's, Elizabeth Bishop's, Margaret Regan's, Alberto Caeiro's, Neruda's, nobody's)

"The moon is our flashlight."

"An empty wallet.  
A pink hairbrush.  
A line of Scripture."

"Death arrives . . . like a shoe with no foot in it."

". . . sweatshirts, size 23 toddler shoes, Avon strawberry lip balm, disposable diapers, masks, Garanimals khakis (size 2T), a red Hello Kitty purse and a Texas flag backpack."

"The rich with their binoculars / . . . back again—"

"A sock hung in a prickly pear, a shirt in a grove of trees, a pair of worn boots lay in the path. And then . . . a fresh footprint, stamped by a tennis shoe after the recent rains."

"Things have no signification, they have existence."

"Who loved the lost thing, who sheltered the last thing of all?"

The moon's bare light.