

Walking Home



The smell of wild garlic in the woods

overlooking the beach is a reminder
I haven't eaten in days. I fail in the smallest
of ways, it's my life's work.

A fallen tree, bark shrivelled, how skin
is useful over bone yet once detached
from its support, loses purpose.

I imagine a boneless body, slab of flesh,
a jellyfish's absent heart, eyes. But here is brain
to contend with, here is memory.

The sea is a distant relative, one
who visits when your mother dies
leaving the uncertainty you loved your parents.

There are no answers to some questions.
I have attempted to enter the asking, tried
to locate the seabed, name it an unfamiliar cousin,

someone I won't grow attached to,
so when I am here, outside this human cover
where everything is low,
I might walk into it and call it *Home*.

Maeve McKenna lives in rural Sligo, Ireland. Her work has been placed in several international poetry competitions and published widely in print and online. Maeve was a finalist in the Eavan Boland Mentorship Award 2020, third in Canterbury Poet of The Year 2021 and a Pushcart nominee 2022. She has work forthcoming in *Banshee* and *The Stony Thursday Book*. A collaborative book with three poets, *How Bright the Wings Drive Us*, won the Dreich Alliance pamphlet competition and was published in October, 2021. Maeve's debut pamphlet, *A Dedication to Drowning*, was published in February 2022 by *Fly on The Wall Press*.

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