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Forty-Four Minute Walk

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Forty-Four Minute Walk

Erin Goudie (Education 2025)

it's almost midnight
but I'm standing alone
on the shot put mound
staring at mourning sky.

yes, there are stars
but it's not poetic.
it's just November &
thirty-seven degrees.

I'd left the library and
liked the twinge of the cold
on my face. so I turned
right instead of left

and started walking,
puffing my dragon air
in the dark places between
cast-iron lampposts

on the wooden trail,
sad acoustic guitar
echoing between my
earbuds, all hollow & stuff.

my feet took me across
a bridge but not over.
a blue heron took off
upstream, I watched

then moved on. Nothing is
metaphor; things just
happen. I take a forty-four
minute walk and the night

cuts through my jeans
to the tops of my thighs
& it's not like being touched
but it is something.

I sniff tear-induced snot.
my nose hardens in the cold;
make a face too much &
it'll freeze like that I guess.

my eartips are marble
now, too, and I wait
as my toes soak up
the icy air. The chill seeps

through my body
and I let it; no friction
palms for heat nor
exhale of breath.

I have no movement left
in me, so I stand here &
slowly turn to statue,
face upturned to sky.