

ROBLEY WILSON

On the Water

after Rilke

How remote everything is,
how long-since gone by.
They tell me the stars
meeting my eye this moment
died thousands of years ago,
and on the water my life
has no more substance than
the scrawl left by my oars.
This is my anxious time;
in someone's river house
a clock strikes the hour—
But whose house is it? If
I stepped out of my heart
into this infinite night,
and if I knew how to pray...
surely one of these stars
will have kept its place.
Surely I will recognize
the one face, pale against
the dark of its origins.