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Abstract
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Gary Catalano

PARK

True. But some things about it remind me of a travel poster. That green, for a start, is too bright, too flat, and much too chemical. And what is one to make of the fact that those shadows look as though they've been stencilled to the grass?

CREEK

You can say what you like out here, but the trees and the rocks will always ignore you. And as for the creek, it likes to burble to itself and simulate voice after voice – a bit like a widow who has got into the habit of pretending that she still leads a rich social life.

TRANSLATION

There's absolutely no one to be seen. Yet you're certain there's someone directly behind that line of trees, for when you hear the sound that comes from that direction – the sound, to be precise, of a thirsty dog drinking from a bowl of water – you know that you can safely translate: horse on blue metal road, walking slowly.

BUSH LULLABY

If it is understandable that I should have mistaken that small white nest snagged at the top of a wild rose for a baby's bootie, it is equally understandable that whenever I think of it I have the strong impression that it is swaying, ever so gently, in the wind.

STRANGER

There are some things you remember with particular clarity: that green bedspread made of dyed hessian, for example, or the block of sandsoap that used to sit on the window sill just above the washing tub in the laundry. You also remember, though with slightly less clarity, that small wicker chair which stood at the head of the bed, and a yellow T-shirt with black markings at the shoulder. That T-shirt seemed to work like a charm, for whenever you put it on and looked into the mirror you'd instantly find yourself face-to-face with someone who seemed pleased to see you. But you, of course, were by no other.