

# Donna Baier Stein

## LANDSLIDE

From a bedroom cozy as a ship's cabin  
we listen to the shivaree of crickets,  
the breathless calls of whippoorwill.  
We call back: this stereo of thieves  
(of bird and human voices) echoes  
where we sleep in our mountain cabin,  
riding the crest of the country.  
Rain torrents on the tin roof until,  
in half-sleep, we fear it will wash us away,  
that the house will slide down  
the side of this mountain.  
There's something to that--  
letting rain have its say,  
being carried away, intact.  
So we lie safe in our cabin.  
I dream of white tigers,  
raccoons whose masks reveal  
things can be other than what they seem..

When we open our eyes, the rain has stopped,  
We hear the whippoorwill name itself  
in three rapid syllables.  
We imagine him perched on a limb,  
kin of the nightjar.  
He calls, hidden under the rattle of crickets,  
witness to what lovers can lose.