

Petition

Brigit Pegeen Kelly

These are the long weeks. The weeks
Of waiting. Let them be
Longer. Let the days smolder
Like the peat slung
In plastic sacks by the greenhouse
And let the seedlings not rush
Into growth but climb the air slowly
As if it were a ladder,
One small foot at a time.
Let the fetid smell of bone meal
Be the body unlocking
As the river does, slowing to a hazy laze
That pulls the boaters in
And makes the fish rise up. And
As the wide-wheeled yellow tractors
Roll along the highway,
Stalling traffic in their wakes,
And the dust from the playing fields
Settles over us like pollen,
Like the balls dropping softly
Into our mitts, let
The willow's love of water—
Its dark and beaded rain—
Be the only storm we long for.



Sestina in Prose

BY KATHARINE COLES

It was like climbing a mountain to those of us who'd climbed one. To the others, it was like, I suppose, something else. In other words, we let everybody find her own figure of speech.

Not that it—speech—lay thick on the ground, or mountain; it presented itself one word at a time, far between. A body had to keep an eye out, like for firewood at dusk, or else

miss her chance. Nobody else, let's face it, cared about metaphor, or even simile, the like-it-or-not-ness of the mountain pretty much getting between a body and her musing, in its going. One

step at a time, anyone could lose herself or someone else just staring at her feet. And *if a body meet a body* is not mere speech but something that could happen, like hopping a bus—though on the mountain

you'll catch no rides, worse luck, the mountain requires to be climbed on foot, one after the other, nothing else will get you up it. There's nothing like such obduracy but in the wild, nobody can tell you otherwise. No simple figure,

this struggle: just a crag, your burden, and your own two feet. Say otherwise, talk through your hat, which I don't care for.

Source: *Poetry* (April 2019)