

POETRY OUT LOUD



Crossing

by Keetje Kuipers

Flagged to a halt by a woman in boots
and an oiled canvas coat, we stopped for her

orange flag on the highway yesterday in
the first flurries of the season and watched

from the truck's cab as they moved the yearlings
from the north pasture to the south. No one

wanted to be the first to go. Their dark
hides veiled in thin lace of flakes like the child-

sized bridal train for sale at the thrift shop
in town, they huddled at the gates making

the faint sounds of mercy. Behind them, men
and women on horseback moved through the scrim

of snow, impossible to know what they
called to each other as we watched their lips

from behind the glass. Today the world is
melt and muck, and from the high road I see

their bodies scattered—easy once again—
across the field. Yesterday is still

a land with a blanket pulled over its borders,
though each knows what it means to have crossed.

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*Poetry Out Loud is sponsored by the National Endowment for the Arts and the Poetry Foundation.
It is a partnership with the Alabama State Council on the Arts and the Alabama Arts Alliance.
Original Poetry State Awards are provided by the Alabama Writer's Forum.*

