

Down by the Hassayampa

Down by the Hassayampa's
shallow, clear and narrow stream
green leaves in cloud shapes flutter
on large shrubs that open clusters of flowers
like small yellow trumpets or large creamy doilies.

Admiring the stream's green shade and its
springs, dimples and eddies, I sit down
on the white trunk of a fallen tree
wishing i could be the fallen tree —
no more standing upright
just lie down by the water.

Through forest leaves the sun in the bright
blue sky strikes gold on every ripple of the stream
as it curves and gleams in a wide ess here
and a wide ess further on through
green bosque and brown and green banks.

Then: light, dancing touch of tiny animal feet
on the back of my hand.
Lizard skittering after some bug or other
hasn't discerned that my hand is a hand
and he's poised there,
pointed nose quivering in green river air,
skinny, waving, black and white-striped tail
curved upward like a scorpion's.

(music of the river)
(water's flow)

I'd approached the river silently
on a sandy path through willows, cottonwoods,
mesquite, hearing and scenting the stream,
simply breathing.

Lizard finds his way off my hand,
disappears into the riverside brush.

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