

Site

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Site

Stuart Cooke

From my room here, the view's dominated by the forest on a small chain of hills in the foreground, which is quickly dwarfed by the Andes further beyond:

before me, a row of houses, then, soon after,
a swarm of blurred, dark-green lines to the sky—
my eyes rise with them until sight spills
across the Andes, further back, but much,
much higher, and treeless, gouged
violently with valleys, sharpened into peaks,
splashed with snow—all this

from my window, behind which I sit, quite warm, looking out across the thick grass of the lawn,
past the houses again, towards the forest, towards—

up there, my hands would be numb within minutes, I'd be delirious with exhaustion after hours
of climbing. From the warmth of this room, then, I can *see* the cold:

within my body's stable field
I can perceive two distinct kinds of space, one
where things such as walls, tiles and trunks sit
in idyllic, colourful counterpoint,
another where life thins
to the precarious minutes of icy alpine air.

In any place, perhaps, such diversity is possible,
but here it's so obvious as to be a sign, and my body,
at once taken in by the Andes and everything they do
to destroy the horizon and leave us enthralled,
is a little tenser, cowering a little
beneath the sight of its death.