

New Poetry by Ellie J. Anderson: "Impact, 1984"



WALL OF ROCK / image by Amalie Flynn

We hike toward a waterfall cascading
through a split in the wall of rock above us.
A crow soundlessly slices a shadow
across the field of snow.
One breath, and the bird is gone.

At the tree line, the tail section
of an airplane, the metal edges ripped
and ragged, stands shiny in the twisted
alpine firs.
The engines lie in the shallow creek,
water pouring over cylinders.
Scrub cushions one wing, the other
is charred into rock,
the ground littered with pieces
I can hold in my hand:
aluminum with buttons, rivets, zipper
heads, upholstery, and jacket fabric
melted into lumps.
In one, the fingertip of a leather glove,
a bobby pin.
It happened in nineteen forty-eight.
A cargo plane clipped the ridge
in a blizzard. Six men died. One woman.
The color of her hairpin tells me she was blond.
The townspeople saw
a fiery flash in a night sky filled with snow.
In daylight, fighting drifts and high winds,

they dragged the bodies out in bags on toboggans.

This would be a good place to leave
your spirit. In the silence,
the wind breathes over the ridge,
and water trickles beneath a layer of ice
that turns blue as it melts into itself.
Gentians and Indian paintbrushes
in the meadow throw their colors
against the rocks.
And the delicate columbine, pale
yellow and pink, only blooms in August.