



Lively little Silver Creek brightens the winter scene on this farm near West Bend—William L. Stonecipher

A Kettle Moraine Winter

*This farm, I guess,
is not worth much
If you're talking
tillable acreage and such.
The land is wavy
as a rolling sea.
The glacier gave it
a pretty good touch.*

*But if I'm talking
just for me
This is the place
I'd want to be.
Below the bridge,
right at the bend,
Where the water barely
reaches your knee.*

*In summer, it's like the world
come to an end
No chores to do,
no fences to mend
Just sit and listen
to the little old creek
And watch to see
what the current will send.*

*It's not quite the same
when the weather gets bleak
You'd better wear boots
and they'd better not leak.
But if you just listen,
you find what you seek
Summer or snow,
you find what you seek.*



*There are trees that belong to bald eagles
and ospreys
and pileated woodpeckers
far from the world
of men.*

*There are also trees that belong to children
boys and girls
and the summer wind.
They are far from the world of men too.*



*The skaters at a distance
could be anybody.
They could be Eugene Navarre
or Bones Strasser.
Except that
Eugene died before we got to high school
and Bones died before we got out.*

*Without faces
the bundled forms
sweep by.
I shout wordlessly:
Eugene!
Bones!
to the cold winter sky.*

*At one time when the snowflakes came
there were twenty or thirty trees
in this space.
That was before the barbed wire
and the iron wheels
and the iron men came along.
Now when the snowflakes come
there is just one tree.
But there are other trees
below the ground.
Waiting.
To change places
with the barbed wire
and the iron wheels
and the iron men.*



*The house is not what you call haunted
although many fathers and mothers
and their children have lived here
and the house has outlasted them all.*

*The walls are thicker than most.
And there sometimes seems to be
a figure, a woman, watching
at the upstairs window.*

*There have been more Christmas
blizzards here than we will ever see.
And there will be a Christmas blizzard
again this year.*

POETRY BY GEORGE VUKELICH

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