

The New Criterion

Poems November 2016

Respiratory

by Bill Coyle

On the stone patio
koi mill in their pond.
What do kept goldfish know
of anything beyond?

They know in any case
that certain shadows cast
upon the water's face
have fed them in the past,

so that when anyone
leans over the low wall
they rush to him as one
to see what crumbs might fall.

Today is a good day
to stay indoors and warm,
the sky, granite and gray,
hung with its forecast storm.

When rain and leaves flash by
your window they appear
to my abstracted eye
as snow, already here.

Bill Coyle is the translator of *Dog Star Notations: Selected Poems 1999–2016* by the Swedish poet Håkan Sandell.

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