



Blondie

"The Tide is High"

Autoamerican

11/1980

Chrysalis

Fossiling

Amy Alexander

To the foothills,
hammer at my side,
silver,
a seven-year-old ready to find dust,
ready to pulverize
but gentle,
gentle,
like the teacher,
hair
in the wind,
who tells me
that I must
seek precision
with my mind
chisel, don't chop,
she says this
without even having to say it,
and I listen,
and one lime rock
after another
comes unremarkable
and then,
coined by hammer
a very old Aspen leaf
and entire schools of fish
swimming in the dust
flashing micah where scales were before.

This gives me an idea:
Within the year,
my own sediments
settle
over a story
I decide I don't have to tell anymore.

Once we leave this place,
I can go a long time without
mentioning it,
so long,
they might name another era after it,
and when I feel the spines

pressing up,
the need to share,
I focus on the leaves alive this year,
the fish swimming today in
Colorado and Roaring Fork waters,
I talk about my favorite records,
Olivia Newton John's
Xanadu
or Blondie,
The Tide is High
and I'm moving on.

I wanted the coast,
not the mountains,
just like I wanted
another life,
dancing on my bed,
comb for a microphone,
my body still owned by stone,
belonging
to a history
I buried
or made up,
as I willed it toward tomorrow.

I found making it new,
like Ezra Pound said,
made it easier.
An artist lives on the edge of time,
and it's a place I'm more comfortable with,
which is why
I've been called stupid behind my back,
and also why I forget a lot,
hence the low standardized test scores
and the never being considered for
gifted and talented.
At the risk of
being found out,
I was willing to
live lower,
a trilobite
talking trivia,
a tipsy chick tracking the latest trends.