

ADRIAN C. LOUIS

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## *Respite*

*Breathe deeply. Inhale.*  
*Chew slowly the pill of respite.*  
*You are becoming sleepy.*  
*You are becoming sleepy.*  
*Your eyelids are very heavy.*  
*Imagine water, peaceful water.*  
*Water slicing through green land.*  
*A water knife, pure & sanctified.*  
*Breathe deeply. Inhale.*

Chiloquin, Oregon 1954.  
The story could be set here  
or anywhere actually, let's  
just say there *is* a place.

There *is* a place or  
maybe there *was* a place.  
That's more accurate.  
Everything beautiful  
eventually turns cannibal.  
Beauty is as beautiful does.  
Stream. Stream, clear as sky.  
Stream. Water bucket clean.  
Stream. Blue with giant rainbow  
swimming as if in cloudless air.  
Stream. A brass hook baited  
with a clump of white bread.  
Rainbow. Lunkers lurk with

fisheyes of greatest contempt,  
aware of their own irrelevancy  
& aware of the boy's magazine.  
Boy. Sitting on a clover patch,  
half dozing under sleepier sun.  
Beaver. Hairy, funky, pissed.  
Beaver. On the hook, furious  
yellow teeth bared & ready to  
take names, jumps on the bank.  
Boy. On the run, willow pole lost.  
On the run, dirty magazine lost too.  
Boy. Safe in a pine forest, sits  
& lights a pilfered Pall Mall.  
He breathes deeply. Inhales  
the mist of metacognition.