

He Lifted the Binoculars to the Window

A Poem Commissioned In honor of Stephen Kellert

By Jamie K. Reaser



Dr. Stephen R. Kellert was the Tweedy Ordway Professor Emeritus of Social Ecology and Senior Research Scholar at the Yale University School of Forestry and Environmental Studies.

The warbler never strays from who he is, or where
he is intended to be. Here, and then gone.
There is a mystery to that for everyone but him.

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What can we do but delight in this life, this collection
of moments that are always trying to get us to come
home to our true nature—unique and collective. All
around us there are clues to our humanity. We must
remember how to read them.

And, then, have the courage.

Of this, I am certain: the path forward is marked by things
that we cannot count. Maybe by things that
we cannot name and will never touch.

This is lovely.

Notice though that we are touched. Touched by a
longing so dangerous that we dare speak of it. Try.
We have become stuck in a conversation
between beauty and woundedness, a woundedness
we have inherited and earned.

How perfect.

This is about a love of place, and place for love. We are
given children to watch at play at the woodland edge,
and along the shore, and amongst the pigeons in a city park.
I know that it is there, and I believe that they can find it.

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The boy never strayed from who he was, or where
he was intended to be. Here, and then gone. There
is a mystery to that for everyone but him.