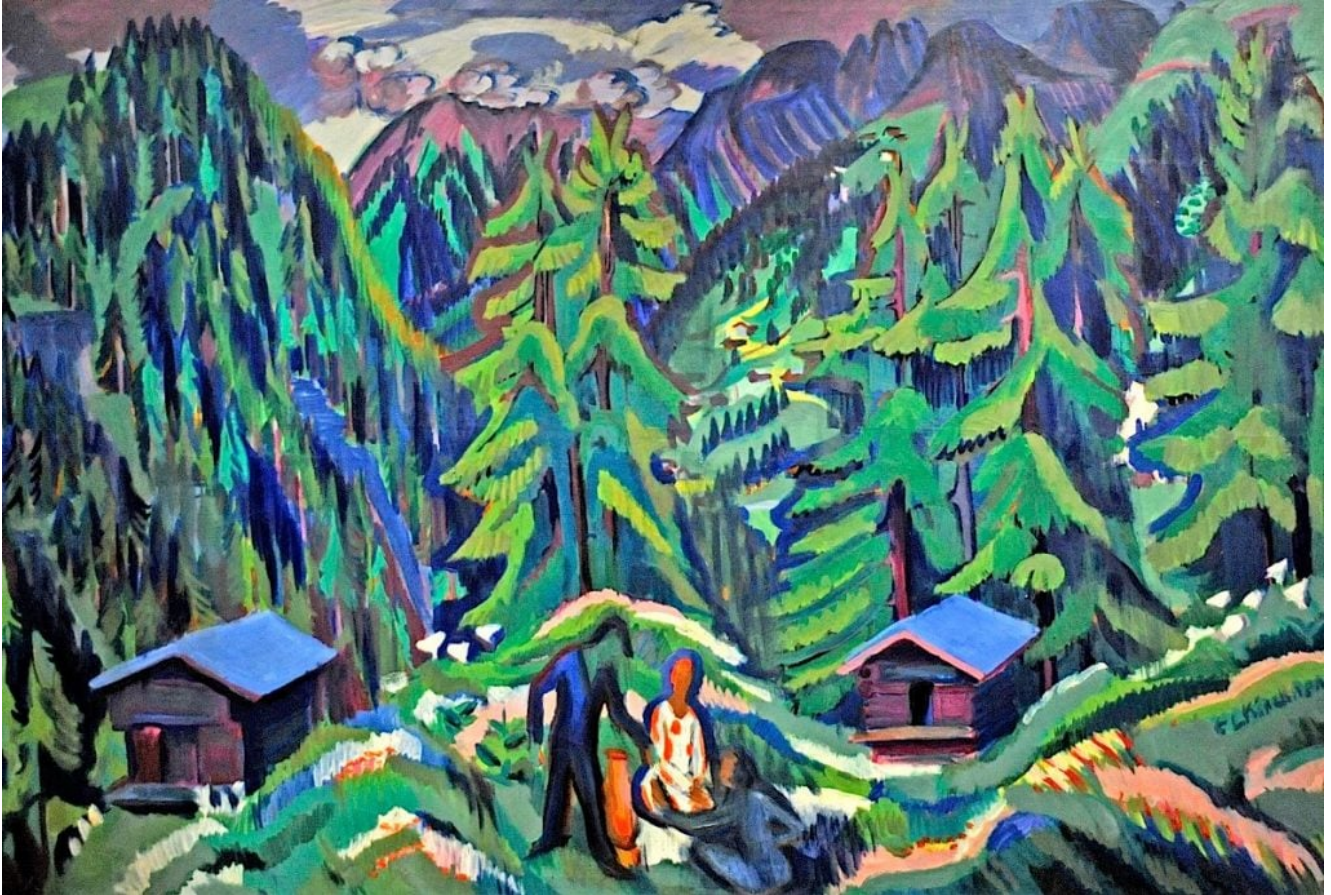


Going Home & 2 More

by [Karen Quickley](#) (November 2024)



Mountain Landscape from Clavadel, (Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, 1926)

Going Home

After Phoebe Wahl's painting "Build Me a House"

They say you
Are alone when
You come into
The world, but
My parents and
A kind physician
Were all present

For my birth as
Well as a nurse who
Had been there
For my older
Brother's birth and
Who would later
Be on duty for
My sister's. No—
I was not alone,
And I was taken
Home to my favorite
House. And now
I'm 49, and all
I want is to go on
A trip that ends
In coming home
To another good
House. For the longest
While I believed
A good man would
Come to offer
Me his home, but
The stars did not
Direct me to him.
Is it really just me
Now? If I'm to live
In a home again,
I probably must
Build it myself.

The Girl and Her Fox

After Lucy Campbell's painting "Guided by Moonlight"

Let me tell you
Of a girl who was
Only ever needed
By a fox. The
World of humans
Let go of her
Almost from the start
Of her life, but
The universe provided
Her with a single
Fox that loved her
More than any human
Ever could or would.
Together they slept
Each and every night,
And as she grew,
The girl realized
There was little that
She needed or
Wanted more than
The fox. Each night
She snuggled and
Cuddled with it.
How soft was the
Fur of her fox.
However, there came
A time when she had
Grown that she
Found herself desiring
A human companion
As well. After all,
She was a human
And not completely
Different from others
Of her kind.
"I'm sad," she told
The fox one night,

And the fox licked
Her face very kindly
And caringly, and
The girl realized
That she was going
To be okay with
Just the fox
Beside her at night.
That was how things
Always had been—
Why would anyone
Expect it to change?

Woman in a Red Skirt

After August Wren's painting "Reflection"

Here I am now. And I appear
To be alone, but I'm joined by
My reflection—most often
Encountered in my own
Language—in this still pond.
There's a sense in this park,
Of the seasons being stuck
On summer, and perhaps I'm
To be here forevermore, seated
Elegantly next to the border
Of a small body of water,
Wondering "What if?" or
Lamenting "If only." Sure,
I still have my beauty, but it's
Different now. Yes, there remains
A soft pinkness on my cheeks.
Yes, I still have somewhat of

A figure that may or may not be
Good enough to gain me romantic
Partnership with a good man. Yes,
I'm Dressed up for myself (and
The Koi) alone. Some might call
This inadvisable, but I've discovered
The trick—for me—to being and
Staying alive is to be there and
For and with myself, to see myself
As clearly as I can right here. I part
My hair down the middle now,
And it's growing out. And I may always
Wear this white blouse because
I've not yet worn a white dress. I color
My lips like my skirt because what
Else is there to do.

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Karen Quickley is an emerging American poet and writer. Her work has been featured in numerous print and online publications and has been nominated for Best of the Net. She lives in northern Indiana with her two favorite pussycats. More at karenquickley.net and apoetinlove.substack.com.

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