

Make Like a Caribou and Hide

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Shield: oak & steel, a business
suit of plate male—
tectonic eruption in a body strong
enough in its violence
to lift a pipe above his head
in a kind of ceremony.

Guardian, reflective green vest
unlike summer birch—shiny
& wrinkled with a walkie-talkie.
Remember the dogs
and who trained them.
Zip-ties tackle isolated
elders.

The protection, environmental,
technologic like the sword
or the saw
mill or the Dawn
dish detergent
to clean a duck-feather
while the spill shrinks
or kills
the sturgeon & salmon.

The white
blood cell
doors & bars to hold
quantified quantum
while the white ford
F-350 carries a jet-ski
to smash plastic scraps
over the stones, gray
in the brook.

Brace your wrist—
for impact—the oil tanker
has run a ground
assessment—
assessed itself safe—to transport
jobs & camps & men & missing, murdered
women spilled like oil
into the river.

1984 taught me many things
like how they will make a statement
but mean another,
apology, declaration, ruling—
the tree is just growing
 horizontally
and without roots, look
how it splits into two,
wood pulp sawdust
a cloud that prospers

into our lungs:
metal fragments
& safer alternatives—

lead is toxic
but see how its thickness
stops an invisible radiation,
it's merely a necessary evil
to piss blood.