

THE LONG WALK

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Oska

OSKANA POETRY & POETICS

Jan Zwicky

*The Long Walk*



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*for Robert Bringhurst*

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COURAGE

And now you know that it won't turn out as it should,  
that what you did was not enough,  
that ignorance, old evil, is enforced

and willed, and loved, that it  
is used to manufacture madness, that it is the aphrodisiac  
of power and the crutch of lassitude, you,

an ordinary heart, just functional, who knows  
that no one's chosen by the gods, the aspens  
and the blue-eyed grass have voices of their own,

what will you do,  
now that you sense the path unraveling  
beneath you?

Sky unraveling, unraveling  
the sea, the sea that still sees everywhere  
and looks at every thing —

not long. What will you do,  
you, heart, who know the gods don't flee,  
that they can only be denied.

Who guess their vengeance.

It has been a long hill, heart.  
But now the view is good.  
Or don't you still believe

the one sin is refusal, and refusal to keep seeking  
when refused?

Come, step closer to the edge, then.

You must look, heart. You must look.



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