Escape

Emily Anna King 锡萍芳

I.

i remember running from everything — the dishes half painted with jelly and peanut butter, blankets unraveled, messages asking if i need anything from the store, a dust bunny in the corner, fern leaves drying, my father's old age and my mother's calls to remind me about family dinner tomorrow, the book dog eared on the counter, cold coffee forgotten in the mug, playing cards shuffled from before, my best friend's news that she's moving, the plane ticket i cannot buy yet to visit, memories of a city where dogs wander alleys filled with gems and cigarettes, my self and the responsibility of knowing her, the future and its mirages of unknown made of shapes of colors like patches of leaves changing —

II.

i knew i would return, but first,

silver stream,

first,

smoothed stones beneath bare feet,

first,

this animal we are, blood and bone and a compass

made of brine and hunger, bare skin to earth

stepping forward, away, beyond

III.

i remember snow
and your voice soft and gentle
like steam over tea

we laid in the field
beneath hawk wings, maple leaves
a feeling of calm

when i think of us
a deer leaps over
small stream towards wildflowers
and waiting rabbit