

2021

## Carol of Seeing Things from the Porch

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### Recommended Citation

Moore, Mary (2021) "Carol of Seeing Things from the Porch," *Birmingham Poetry Review*: Vol. 48, Article 51.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.library.uab.edu/bpr/vol48/iss2021/51>

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*Mary Moore*

## Carol of Seeing Things from the Porch

The yew's needles, that mish-mash  
of pound signs and hash marks,  
tagging who knows who,

have snagged a small web:  
hammock the eye can ride,  
cloud snit, snow thistle.

The no-see-ums dot  
the web and the air  
around me, little eaters

who nip my bud,  
whatever that might be:  
a wing, a tooth, a brood

of worries. Oh small-blooded  
ones, we're kin;  
now I won't quit you though I can't

requite you. You mob  
the red and black salt box  
whose white ate the snow's

last year. Abandoned,  
it bulges, a rock of salt, a block  
assault on neat and put away.

It memorializes  
our lackadaisical  
forget-and-don't-look—

like Lot's wife, whose  
looking at the ruined  
forbidden city astonished her

into salt. Why salt?  
I bet she wept:  
her whole damned body

became tears'  
indifferent residue.  
The weird logic

of metamorphosis:  
by god: Medusa's beauty  
earns her a coif of snakes:

here and now, chorus  
of keening, a siren  
and a black and white hound

actually called Carol—  
the two ululations  
braid and rise so high

they hurt to hear.  
Is it consoling  
that earth metamorphoses

minerals, charges, urges, maybe  
soul, and salts it away  
into place?

The yew tags us all,  
or will. The mystery  
that luck or providence has wrought

is that *wary* and *aware*  
even are, when witness turns  
to tears, salt, stone.