



A PLACE FOR POETRY ———

DIRECTIONS FOR ARRIVING IN THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE

—RICHARD CUMMINS

First, turn off your television set.
You'll never find anything with that kind of headlight.
Second, turn off all your other lights, especially the porch—
You don't want a passing car to spot you.
Third, listen to your house breathe.
You live inside its in and out, out and in,
As it lives inside your yard and the yard
Inside your neighborhood, your neighborhood in its city,
And on like this to the furthest twinkle.
Finally, close your eyes and put out all the lights.
Breathe to the bottom curve of your belly.
Exhaling, you are lava rising to form a new island.
When you land onshore, hold out your hand,
a passport to the stillness that lives here
with all of us.