

Abduction

by Kate Gaskin



Painting: "Forest" by Åsa Antalfy Eriksson (www.aszelaartiv.com). "Abduction" was written by Kate Gaskin for *Rattle's* Ekphrastic Challenge, May 2015, and selected by Eriksson as the Editor's Choice winner.

When was the last
time I touched your hair
pale as milk, face wan

as the carton that claimed it?
Another day the trees
knit tighter to the one

before until the forest chokes.
But it wasn't, as I'd remembered,
a great adventure,

packing sandwiches,
coming home when there was
nothing better to do.

My love, they found you not
in a copse of firs
but interred, after a wretch

of weeks, bone-white
and weathered
in a fist of gravel.

Has it been this way
forever? You holding
the basketball that night

beneath a sky scattershot
with stars, and then
the sound of you gone,

how the ball bounced once,
twice, then rolled to a stop
in the empty parking lot.

