

# Primary Growth

Chaya Thanhauser

This is a landscape but  
you already wrote it. A field

of faded weeds is *Sumac*  
and *Teasel* to you.

Out of sight of the water tower  
whose heart beats steadily

over town, the road runs old  
and drunkenly past the bones

of three houses. The first two burnt  
to the ground, one chimney left,

a stubborn witness to what it should  
have held inside. What you wrote

edited me out, left another stubborn  
chimney. The third house just gave

up one day, slouched down and folded  
like a losing hand of poker. I guess

they took the train when they left –  
used-up railroad ties lie in a corner

of the field, a pile of  
condensed movement.

On our way back to town  
we stopped to watch the sunset faraway

and still. I waited for either you  
or it to make a move.

You wrote this landscape  
is *equally abandoned*

*by people and attended to by biotic  
forces.* You let me see your journal

so I could quote you on that,  
but what you'd written

about landscape fell somehow  
on the same page

where you wrote about *dinner and  
a walk before bed as lovers do,*

as we did too, but not in this instance  
and that fell beatingly somehow

onto a bone house, a furred hand,  
a folded wing, my watertower heart.

This is a body but you only see landscape --  
February, final glow of sky, scattering of geese.