

Naomi Shihab Nye

What Happened to the Air

Well there were so many currents in it after a time,
so many streams of voices crisscrossing above the high pasture
when she went out to feed the horses, gusts of ringing
and buzzing against her skin. Sometimes near the oldest live oak
she paused to feel a businessman from Waxahachie calling out
toward his office in El Paso, a mother boarding a plane in Lubbock
wake up her Comfort girl. Hard to move sometimes inside
so many longings, urgencies of time and distance,
hard to pretend everything you needed was right in front of you,
bucket and feed and fence, that bundle of hay Oscar pitched inside your gate,
that rusting tractor Sky might fix someday, You wished everything
were still right *here*, the way it used to be,
when the Saturday mystery episode traveling toward your radio
was the only beam you might ride from west to east,
before we were all so strangely connected and disconnected
inside a vibrant web of signals, and a crowded wind.