

ANDREW SCHELLING

from the *Arapaho Songbook*

White owls
northern bodies
learning all you can about language—
the hammer mountain range
willows, willows
the many things done
with a verb
can you speak one that pierces the heart?
wox noho'kuhnee-t
'where the mule deer sings'

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Awake in the green forest
the red berries a man's dream
one moon-bent lifetime
violet veins run the root of it
with a morning hard-on to piss, noting
the sap, the *soma*
three basic intimations rise up
moon-words in Sanskrit
three separate moons
into the leathery bearberry

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Down in Albuquerque
JB has refurbished a
saxophone from the '20s
I angle my foot on the bucket-bass
there are songs of the Arapaho drainage
before roads, gasoline, came out West
fork-tail swallow flashes over

the beaver pond
the saxophone, he calls it a conduit,
blue notes of the heart

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Solitude clear talk
no one seen
Nadia Liu rehearses the poem with gestures
moon pauwlonia dangle yellow remorse
give me an eagle wand to inquire
where's the old man
gone says the boy the ravines
hills forests the mist rolling
gone looking for poisons
clouds too thick to see where

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Death is not
coyote's fault
people ought to just go and
return he says,
four days answers hummingbird
four days the smell gets too awful
okay have it like that I'm going away
oh killing is easy, the Pomo basketmaker
observed, killing is easy it is
life that's hard to keep

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Taking the owl's tooth
taking the six roads of changing & passing
beyond the far western pinnacles
it is dark to go back to the
notebook & read

the clues to a friend's suicide
WE'LL NEVER SOLVE THE RIDDLES
ALL IN ONE LIFETIME
not I said the fox
not I the wise woman

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I'm wondering what a lithium
mine does in the Chilean Andes
batteries for hybrid cars—
red hair sweeps across your face
that's one way to say it
he-enters-the-tent-lookingly
or enteringly-he-looks
our watershed sharpens with animal cries
when we enter they know it
they, the words themselves

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Armstrong Doolittle's Notched Diamond
Boone's Top-slot Visible Guard
Connelly's Knife-edge T-Bar
Devore's Wire Lock
Edenborn's Offset Barb
Gregg's Barbed Snake Wire
Harbaugh's Torn Ribbon
Mann's Semifluted Ribbon
Page's Half Hitch & Loop
Nadelhoffer's Flat-wire Gull Wing

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A smoke-blue tool cache
each scalloped edge
holds the scrapings of ghost horse & bear

recollect the loves the many
sorts of love the predator lost track of,
the family members, women,
flaked edges I thought at Jemez after three
four hours the drum beat came
from the earth itself
flaked in the hooves of the buffalo