Shanty Brook

Look how, for the fun of it, the cold lashing water flicks and spills its long silver sleeves

over the naked shoulders of glacial bedrock, licking the rough stones smooth with the constant caress

of its effortless tongue. Sleek shawls of silk unfurl their long slick bolts which send you sliding

down the swift tumble-toss of runny channels and slippery burls, hurling you feet first into splashing pools

> of frothy suds, fretted and roiled like fallen clouds.

It's clear that Nature doesn't give a tin whistle for money or art, even though this pelting stream ceaselessly

hollows and scoops its stoneware of basins and rounded bowels, filling its pockets with coins of buffed pebbles. It babbles away in free verse for the sheer joy of it, happy to hear the voice of its own fluency.

It croons its cheerful song like a translator or singer, sending the message of its music into rootlines of bracken

and bunchberries, into soggy cushions of green moss, into thin saplings of red spruce, and, yes, even into rootless ones like you and me.

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