

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.