

Landscapes: the Journal of the International Centre for Landscape and Language

Volume 3
Issue 2 *Hydrobotanica*

Article 11

January 2009

Darter

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Recommended Citation

van Son, R. (2009). Darter. *Landscapes: the Journal of the International Centre for Landscape and Language*, 3(2).

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Darter *by Rose van Son*

1. Down-feathered
wings out
you greet me
by the edge of this
Big Wide River
your neck strikes space
between limestone and sky

2. A school of fish
jack-knives water's surface
plays games of fate
neck turned
you listen
stories in the afternoon

3. The two of us
paint fisherman
silhouette colours his hat
a shade darker

You do not falter
movement is rare
stoop occasionally to bury secrets
behind your head

A caw distils
serenity

Afternoon shadows
pass two-fold

4. Twins
tip the balance
disgust patterns your face

Wake pleats shadows
uncertainty spreads

Still you stand your ground

5. Confidence
smarts your face

try the water again
paddle sequence

Your neck the only reminder of your visit

Rose van Son is a WA writer and educator; she loves language and culture. Her poems and short stories have been published in several journals including *Westerly* and *Indigo*. In 2000 she won the Katharine Susannah Prichard Short Fiction Award.