

My Own Quiet Corner

by Eileen Hoover

My own quiet corner of the world,
my solace
my contentment
my brother by my side
and we went forth to discover
I, the naive
the trusting
he, the cynic
the older
felt he must know more
even when he didn't



but together we foraged
 eyes turned wonderingly upward
 then downward
 his steps were quiet on the earth
 in his soft leather shoes
 mine were louder
 my hard soles disrupted
 the quiet of the delicate calm

"Are we on a path?" I said.
 "Don't worry," he said. "I know
 where we are."
 I followed
 he followed
 both led by wonders yet ahead

we found pine needles
 now ever brown
 and shuffled through remains
 of leaves long fallen --
 a little spongy now

and small white butterflies
 told little stories
 of life as part of the breeze
 "We hardly ever see butterflies at home,"
 I said.
 "Home's polluted,"
 he said.
 "Oh."

we found silver
 in the rocks of the stream
 tiny sparkling bits underneath
 shimmering ripples of water
 "Diamonds," I said.
 "Mica," he said.
 "Oh."

we found a menagerie of
 crawling things
 black
 brown
 white
 gray
 ugly
 bugs

two legs
six legs
eight legs
more legs than anything would ever
need legs
in the midst of the quiet
to lift just one rock
began tremors of activity
disrupted whole ways of life
with giant hands as homewreckers
"What do they eat?" I asked.
"Each other," he answered.
"Oh."

I smiled when I looked at my shoes
the toes were brown
soft dusty brown
around every bend
up every hill
over each rock
we sought and found
funny creatures
strange plants
weirdly shaped trees

"Someone's calling us," I said.
"Whippoorwill," he said.

I looked
and smelled
and listened
and learned
and loved

"I can't wait to take all of this home with me,"
I said.
"You can't take a forest home with you, dummy,"
he said.

I didn't think he knew so very much after all.