

A Poem

by Rhet Lickliter

Running like slow motion under words and phrases
that travel like missiles above my head,
they hold onto wire. Entire conversations passing over
my head, up above my reach, as high as the treetops
that once were here, but had to make way for
conversations, dialogues that cover great distances,
across towns and states and countries.
I cannot turn my head to keep up, I cannot blink
my eyes, I cannot spit or whistle. I cannot break into
this conversation, it is gone. I cannot break into that
conversation, it is gone. It is too late to say,
“excuse me . . . ” They travel faster than automobiles,
faster than airplanes, much faster than letters and
packages. They travel like gunshots, like bullets.
They take a ride. They hold onto wire. They travel
like missiles overhead, guided, above the long arch
of the earth.