

BARBARA BLOOM

April, Pinnacles Road

Pinnacles National Park,
California

Seven cattle guards on the narrow road—
and clattering over each of them in turn,
it was impossible not to recall the fairy tales
I'd spent my childhood reading, for yes,
one was clearly going deeper and deeper into a place
utterly separate from the artichoke fields
and the vineyards I'd passed on the highway—
and then, seeing, suddenly,
the jagged line of the Pinnacles,
rising up behind the farm off to the right
with its falling-down barn and faded house,
there could be no doubt. The steep rocks
sprung up from nowhere,
like a magic trick you gasp at every time.

I write this now, a thousand miles away,
looking out at a conifer-covered mountain,
and though it's spring here, the branches
of the big-leaf maples are still bare,
the new leaves not yet unfurled,
daffodils the only color besides green—
and this is as it should be,
but I'm remembering the rumble of the cattle guards
under my tires
as I'd drive in, hairpin turn by hairpin turn:
the sun-bleached grass,
and then the California poppies, sky lupines,
the tiny yellow flowers called goldfields
blazing on the hills.

Barbara Bloom taught English and creative writing at Cabrillo College in Aptos, California, for over thirty years and put down deep roots in that community, but she also has strong ties to the Pacific Northwest, having lived there as a child on a remote homestead. She has published two books of poetry and her work has appeared in various literary magazines, including *Catamaran Literary Reader*.

JOHN LAUE

Under the Blue. 2019
Archival photographic print, 8 x 6 in



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