

Spring

Early in the morning:

the calm so clear,
light refracted in pearls of snow,
grasses awakening,
a thrush on a branch
and swans in V-formation
with the southerly wind
under their wings.
The world around
melting together
into a new beginning.

Humbly
the migratory birds stand
on the threshold of time.

Steinunn Ásmundsdóttir

Cold was that beauty ...

Icelandic nature poetry

— 8 —

Selected by Helga K. Einarsdóttir

Translated by Bernard Scudder



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Icelandic nature in all its forms is the subject of the poems in this book. Winter storms, summer nights, spring breezes and autumn darkness colour the thoughts of the poets as they invoke both man's battles with the elements and his unparalleled experience of the beauty that is everywhere to be seen. Mountains, valleys, grassy plains, deserts, moorland lakes, sea ice and ragged cliffs ... the sun moves over the oceans, icy fetters break, birds take to wing and a boat is launched yet again ...

Works by many of Iceland's greatest poets throughout the centuries, selected by Helga K. Einarsdóttir and translated by Bernard Scudder.

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