

E. MARTIN NOLAN

WATERWAY, LONDON ON

Thames River, you're not what you were
when you were called only the Antler River
in another language. You're dammed,
directed, your flow predictable and weak.
Chartered through the tame city, yata,
William Blake, etc., yata. People lob fridges
into your mediated course. The poets pull
them out again. I've seen it all on Facebook,
they clean your banks like tiny apes picking
some shit, needles, and condoms off a gianter ape
who is also a planet complete with rivers, etc.

But, oh River, they don't save you. I've heard.
You're beyond that. Damage you, drop fridges, etc.
into you, but you're beyond that too. How could you die,
or even be in any way the words we apply to you?

I hear you, yards over, too clear, too loud, from so far off.
You're a grand sound, an atmosphere beyond yourself, in winter.

Unmuffled by leaves, I hear you, River, flow over
the mini dam—how you roar in the cold. In summer
what you hear is not just the wind but the leaves
moving. But the river rush rings right through the cold.

Inside, the water pipe commands my ears.
Then it stops and the river and wind seep, barely,
through the double panes, blurred and weak.

Then the fridge kicks on. I should have a beer and read something.