The Moose in Mountain West Bank

John Bennett

Upon reopening the doors at 8 A.M., Geraldine Fisher, sixty-eight
years young and senior teller at Mountain West Bank
for thirty-two of those, wants to know how the 684 lbs. Shiras bull moose
got through her lobby last night without appropriate clearance.
Further, she'd like answered why it stands near Accounting, unstartled,
waiting patiently for release. If all of these questions go unanswered

then perhaps FaultLine Security Incorporated can enlighten as to how it managed
avoiding all alarms a bank like hers has employed to prevent
the very event she finds herself in. When Wildlife Management tranquilizes,
gurneys, and agrees to its uniqueness, Geraldine is still left with a little unease:
the blithe eyes like silver dollars that floated in the dark and the long breath
from broad nostrils as she backed away.

So, when I arrive at the bank later that day—
filing cabinets in order, Accounting
ruthlessly piling up those digits for decisions,
and that nothing-hum of moving
forward that banks have by afternoon—
any effort in the check I deposit
goes unnoticed when Geraldine tells me her story
in such a way that makes me angry
at a world with such a smug smile some days:
taking away our currency for consistency
and depositing a moose in a bank.

Darling wife, how often have we prepared
a meal similar to the one we find
ourselves undertaking tonight?

I suspect this will not be the last time
I report this kind of story to you
later in the day. As we make our salads—
dice the onions into little lice, quarter
peppers, halve olives, shred mozzarella—
the dressing sits at the edge of our plates

in a little saucer the circumference I think
I can make when I reach the tip of my index
to my thumb without effort, or industry, or anxiety.

All night we reach deep into our minds
and speculate; go on drawing up the blueprint:
the door left carelessly ajar at closing, those gangly,

thin moose legs stepping over trip lasers,
then the simple mind of the mammal sensing incongruity
by planting itself in Accounting and waiting.

I watch your eyes widen and dart along gray lines
of what happened and your salad and what we might
never know–dipping into conjecture, unsteady
as Geraldine's once calculating hand
when she offered me another adjusted balance.