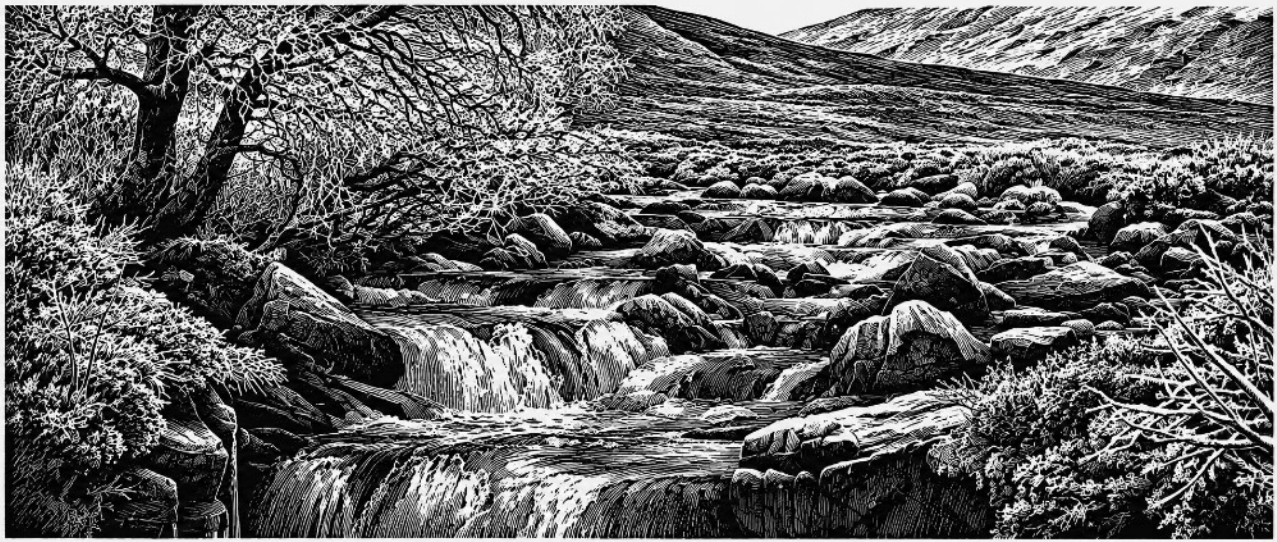


The Cost of Living



The first fine frosty morning
of fall.
Every branch,
every blade of grass,
picked out in patterns
of wispy white.
The sun
glinting
off the glass
of the greenhouse,
opaque with ice.
My breath
coalescing into clouds
as it delicately drifts away.
The beauty of it
somehow softens
the suffering
that is to come.
The birds and mice
who will freeze
or starve.
The seeds
that will die
before they have a chance
to grow.

to heat their homes,
to feed themselves
and their families.
The island-dwellers
on the other side of the world
who will watch their shorelines
slowly submerged,
because we have not learned
sustainable ways
to survive.
My feet rejoice
at the crunch of frozen grass.
My skin tingles
with delight
at the touch of crisp, cold air.
My heart leaps with joy,
as my head
worries.
The land exhales
with relief,
as the people brace themselves
for winter.

The people
who will struggle

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