

# Going Home & 2 More

by [Karen Quickley](#) (November 2024)



Mountain Landscape from Clavadel, (Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, 1926)

Going Home

*After Phoebe Wahl's painting "Build Me a House"*

They say you  
Are alone when  
You come into  
The world, but  
My parents and  
A kind physician  
Were all present

For my birth as  
Well as a nurse who  
Had been there  
For my older  
Brother's birth and  
Who would later  
Be on duty for  
My sister's. No—  
I was not alone,  
And I was taken  
Home to my favorite  
House. And now  
I'm 49, and all  
I want is to go on  
A trip that ends  
In coming home  
To another good  
House. For the longest  
While I believed  
A good man would  
Come to offer  
Me his home, but  
The stars did not  
Direct me to him.  
Is it really just me  
Now? If I'm to live  
In a home again,  
I probably must  
Build it myself.

The Girl and Her Fox

*After Lucy Campbell's painting "Guided by Moonlight"*

Let me tell you  
Of a girl who was  
Only ever needed  
By a fox. The  
World of humans  
Let go of her  
Almost from the start  
Of her life, but  
The universe provided  
Her with a single  
Fox that loved her  
More than any human  
Ever could or would.  
Together they slept  
Each and every night,  
And as she grew,  
The girl realized  
There was little that  
She needed or  
Wanted more than  
The fox. Each night  
She snuggled and  
Cuddled with it.  
How soft was the  
Fur of her fox.  
However, there came  
A time when she had  
Grown that she  
Found herself desiring  
A human companion  
As well. After all,  
She was a human  
And not completely  
Different from others  
Of her kind.  
"I'm sad," she told  
The fox one night,

And the fox licked  
Her face very kindly  
And caringly, and  
The girl realized  
That she was going  
To be okay with  
Just the fox  
Beside her at night.  
That was how things  
Always had been—  
Why would anyone  
Expect it to change?

Woman in a Red Skirt

*After August Wren's painting "Reflection"*

Here I am now. And I appear  
To be alone, but I'm joined by  
My reflection—most often  
Encountered in my own  
Language—in this still pond.  
There's a sense in this park,  
Of the seasons being stuck  
On summer, and perhaps I'm  
To be here forevermore, seated  
Elegantly next to the border  
Of a small body of water,  
Wondering "What if?" or  
Lamenting "If only." Sure,  
I still have my beauty, but it's  
Different now. Yes, there remains  
A soft pinkness on my cheeks.  
Yes, I still have somewhat of

A figure that may or may not be  
Good enough to gain me romantic  
Partnership with a good man. Yes,  
I'm Dressed up for myself (and  
The Koi) alone. Some might call  
This inadvisable, but I've discovered  
The trick—for me—to being and  
Staying alive is to be there and  
For and with myself, to see myself  
As clearly as I can right here. I part  
My hair down the middle now,  
And it's growing out. And I may always  
Wear this white blouse because  
I've not yet worn a white dress. I color  
My lips like my skirt because what  
Else is there to do.

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Karen Quickley is an emerging American poet and writer. Her work has been featured in numerous print and online publications and has been nominated for Best of the Net. She lives in northern Indiana with her two favorite pussycats. More at [karenquickley.net](http://karenquickley.net) and [apoetinlove.substack.com](http://apoetinlove.substack.com).

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