

2008

# On the Water

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## Recommended Citation

Wilson, Robley. "On the Water." *The Iowa Review* 38.1 (2008): 115-115. Web.  
Available at: <https://doi.org/10.17077/0021-065X.6424>

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ROBLEY WILSON

*On the Water*

*after Rilke*

How remote everything is,  
how long-since gone by.  
They tell me the stars  
meeting my eye this moment  
died thousands of years ago,  
and on the water my life  
has no more substance than  
the scrawl left by my oars.  
This is my anxious time;  
in someone's river house  
a clock strikes the hour—  
But whose house is it? If  
I stepped out of my heart  
into this infinite night,  
and if I knew how to pray...  
surely one of these stars  
will have kept its place.  
Surely I will recognize  
the one face, pale against  
the dark of its origins.