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Seeing in the Fog

Gloria D. Nixon-John

This morning it is strangely warm
for the 5th of December in Michigan,
seagulls circle the parking lot at Rite Aid Drugs.
Just yards away Lake Orion is hidden by fog
and the white pines near its banks
look heavenly, an apparition, trees in clouds.

On clearer mornings these pines look sparse
branches more open than the other pines
needles spindly and loose, still a good place
for the smaller birds to seek shelter and rest.

The clerk in the store says that she
is not in the mood for buying gifts,
says she would rather deal with snow
than this mud and this fog.
The strangers in line behind me agree
their heads bob on carnival springs.

But I do not want the fog to lift
I like the clarity that this invisibility makes
I like the edge it gives to venue,
how it drops the horizon right here.

Then just when I have safely placed myself
I think about the stripes on the whirl-a-gig
and how they mute with the spinning,
I see the clerk's hand rise up, open, spread
like a wing, and I know that the fog will lift
then dissipate like so many sighs.

About the author

Gloria Nixon-John has taught high school English for a total of 28 years. She is past director of the Oakland Writing Project, a frequent presenter at state and national conferences, and a published poet, essayist, and fiction writer.