I Do Not Know Its Name

Carrie Newcomer

He leaned in and whispered as he turned the page
And he said, "Make yourself into a flame"
A crazy old lion with his hair all backlit
Grinnin' like a little boy who has a secretAnd I do not know its name
Though it's ever entwining
And I believe it must look
Like an old man shiningWe were eatin' summer peaches
By a roadside stand
Juice running down like laughter
On our chin and on our handsWhen we were done, we looked around
And smiled at each other
And you said
"Come on, Carrie, let's have another"And I do not know its name
No matter how I try
But I believe that it must taste
Like peaches eaten by the roadsideHe drove a rental car shuttle
To the airports on Sundays
We chatted that gray morning
'Bout the choir he sang with, WednesdaysHe sang a haunting gospel hymn
Shameless and clear
With only me, a wandering stranger
Sitting there to hearAnd I do not know its name
Elusive and subtle
But I believe it must sound
Like that man singing in the shuttleStanding in the river, barefoot in the current
I hear the sound of a bird call and I try to learn it
The water is a wonder, it's cold and fast and deep
I saw the fish go swimming out too far for me to reachAnd I do not know its name
Swimmer or watcher
But I believe that there is always something
Moving beneath the waterIf holy is a sphere
That cannot be rendered
There is no middle place
Because all of it is centerI do not know its name
I do not know its name
I do not know its name

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