

Ruth Holzer

Solitary Journey

(after the painting by Fritz Mackensen, 1896)

A man in a boat with a single sail
glides through the reed-edged waterway
this perpetual April afternoon.
A rounded cloud in the pallid sky

glides through the reed-edged waterway.
The world bound by a fixed horizon,
a rounded cloud in the pallid sky
and the curve of the canvas taut in a breeze.

His world bound by a fixed horizon,
a mound of peat on the open moor
and the curve of the canvas taut in a breeze.
His hand on the tiller, no other companion

but a mound of peat on the open moor.
He looks straight ahead, intent on the distance,
his hand on the tiller, no other companion,
silently moving along with the current.

He looks straight ahead, intent on the distance,
the man in the boat with a single sail,
silently moving along with the current
this perpetual April afternoon.