

LIA PURPURA

*Walk with Escaped Convicts Nearby*

Grass that won't spring back into upright. Sky that won't keep its dark tacked down. Dogs won't quiet. Dogs changing this story, hour to hour. Mid-morning. Every twig-snap scattering the birds. Where's water. Where's cover. The end of it all very close, and then not. Consequences recede, then grow too large to see. Prayers from childhood come—for the basics, water, a hunter's shack and no hunter, then the bargain-and-promise kind, then the prayer-questions: why me, was I given these two good legs? All the eluding, all the close-calling, the ropes, knives, and dusk-travel.

It's been weeks of this running.

One doesn't think *it will end*. One doesn't imagine it will continue either.

And there, in that space, between those two thoughts—there's the plan. Not enough material for a future but still, here comes the next move.

It makes no sense at all, I know. I've known those very simple days, the small and highly detailed practical irrationalities that fill them.