Talk About Walking

Talk about walking in your poem today. Perhaps take a walk and have your poem be descriptive of just what you see.

Go for a walk, if it is not too dark.
Get some fresh air, try to smile.
Say something kind
To a safe-looking stranger, if one happens by.

Hafiz/Ladinsky

Walker

Walker, your footsteps
are the road, and nothing more.

Walker, there is no road,
the road is made by walking.

Walking you make the road,
and turning to look behind
you see the path you never
again will step upon.

Walker, there is no road,
only foam trails on the sea.

Antonio Machado
from *Border of a Dream: Selected Poems*,
translated by Willis Barnstone)

Tea at the Palaz of Hoon

Not less because in purple I descended
The western day through what you called
The loneliest air, not less I was myself.

What was the ointment sprinkled on my beard?
What were the hymns that buzzed beside my ears?
What was the sea whose tide swept through me there?

Out of my mind the golden ointment rained,
And my ears made the blowing hymns they heard.
I was myself the compass of that sea:

I was the world in which I walked, and what I saw
Or heard or felt came not but from myself;
And there I found myself more truly and more strange.

Wallace Stevens
in *The Palm at the End of the Mind*

Talk About Walking

Where am I going? I'm going out, out for a walk. I don't know where except outside. Outside argument, out beyond wallpapered walls, outside wherever it is where nobody ever imagines. Beyond where computers circumvent emotion, where somebody shorted specs for rivets for airframes on today's flights. I'm taking off on my own two feet. I'm going to clear my head, to watch mares'-tails instead of TV, to listen to trees and silence, to see if I can still breathe. I'm going to be alone with myself, to feel how it feels to embrace what my feet tell my head, what wind says in my good ear. I mean to let myself be embraced, to let go feeling so centripetally old.
Do I know where I'm going? I don't. How long or far I have no idea. No map. I said I was going to take a walk. When I'll be back
I’m not going to say.

Philip Booth
from *Lifelines: Selected Poems 1950-1999*

A WALK AROUND THE PROPERTY
(an excerpt)

The moon shines down from the black November sky. The tide rises like a sweeping, white-ruffed arm, erasing all the pages that have come before. The evidence accumulates that nobody is watching over us, and gradually, as the streets and houses drift toward night, all the words inside them close their eyes; the sentences coil up like snakes and sleep.

It’s just me now and my famous aching heart under the stars—my heart that keeps moving like a searchlight in its longing for the hearts of other people, who in a sense, already live there, in my heart,

and keep it turning.  

Tony Hoagland
from *Priest Turned Therapist Treats Fear of God*, 2018

November 18

*Cloudy, dark and windy.*

Walking by flashlight at six in the morning, my circle of light on the gravel swinging side to side, coyote, raccoon, field mouse, sparrow, each watching from darkness this man with the moon on a leash.

Ted Kooser
from *Winter Morning Walks: one hundred postcards to Jim Harrison*