

## LUCIUS RICHARD O'BRIEN: THE CANADIAN ROCKIES, 1882

Blunt, solid, endless these northwest ramparts were.  
Like something wondrous never seen before.  
Brimming with ambition, he assumed  
he would soon have the peaks in hand  
to narrow to his canvas frame  
and make his name forever.

But they conjured with the hoodoo,  
plagued him with blackflies.  
They treed and bogged him into circles,  
soured his sleep with a cougar's print.  
Under his slicker in the drizzle,  
choked and blind with smoke,  
he thought of better places.

Better the day at Kicking Horse, when,  
mounted on the catcher of a locomotive,  
he gulped the walloping air,  
flapped his hat to a glacier,  
and whooped at a mountain goat.

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