

Gary Gildner

Calling from the Scaffold

for Paula

Gizmo says leave a message so
this is for you, sweetheart,
who are not here to breathe
our mountain air and to see that pair
you love rubbing the plum
tree crazy, the doe
glancing back as if to tell
Mr. Big Snort to cork his his-
trionics and be grateful,
and how the yolky sun is running over
a soft gray sky, that shade of belly
a trout can flash flipping la-
de-dah near my floating fly,
and how a little wind sallied
by, snatched up my
painter's cap and posed it more
or less on the far eave's edge
where this flighty humming-
bird, zooming in fits, wants to
figure its meaning, and so
here I am in the middle
of a rich philosophy, that
shimmering between
starting and truly starting and
feeling it and knowing
you would too, only you
are two time zones away

among level-headed mid-
westerners maybe stopped mid-
stretch on their way up
to bed, saying my, my
children of Adam
would you look at that,
and I'm guessing it's
the full moon because
later on she'll be on
the loose out here, big
and brassy, prowling the Palouse,
the Clearwater, the Snake, and man
oh man the ruffling
she can produce tucking in
cowboys who like their covers just so
while covering all bets to discom-
bobulate at will—well,
I just wanted to say
seeing those deer
I missed you
and got carried away
though not far enough.