

## Braiding Sweetgrass

All weekend I've been reading Robin  
Wall Kimmerer

who is teaching me  
how we are raised

not to recognize the world  
as family.

The other-than-human  
*is* communicating, observation

as a form of listening.  
Kimmerer calls it a grammar of animacy

we are taught not to know.  
Which makes me a lot less self-conscious

about my habit of talking to, well,  
everything.

Last month on a walk I chatted with  
a pair of deer, a wide array of plants

in too many front yards, and  
a squished banana

*—why are you on the street?  
who left you here?—*

then that same evening I thought  
I heard our human neighbours

—MICHAEL V SMITH

in their garden, only it was just a sprinkler.  
So did you say hi? my husband asked.

It reminds me of the end of *Room*  
—the book, not the movie—

in which the narrator says good-bye  
to his friend things like Spoon, and Room

herself. As much as I was impressed  
with the mastery of that ending

signifying the end of his attachment  
to a place of oppression

he couldn't fathom, I was also feeling  
his loss of animacy.

Now I can point my husband  
to Kimmerer

who validates  
my attempts to befriend the world;

Nature not as an object  
we do things to

but a subject  
we are in a relationship with.

So. Hello, Rock. Hello, Pond.  
Hello, Banana.

Hello, Moose.