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"Why I Sleep Outside"

Kelsey, Elin



Sleeping brown bear.

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Kelsey, Elin. "Why I Sleep Outside." *Springs: The Rachel Carson Center Review*, no.2 (December 2022).

I can't quite remember when I first pulled a camping mat and sleeping bag under my covered back deck and hunkered down for the night. That makeshift arrangement has evolved into a full-size bed, down duvets, and a secure sleeping space. But I do know why I sleep outside. I do it because I

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am nature: Because I am less than whole when separated from the wind, the rain, the scent of earth, the rising crescendo of geese calling as they migrate through the night. I sleep outside because I am less alive within the sterile confines of monochromatic walls and temperature-controlled interiors, no matter how much I admire and appreciate their aesthetic design and beauty. I sleep outside because I cannot stand to miss even a single morning of spring birdsong, the chill of winter on my nose, or the moment when dusk turns to night. I sleep outside because I like the shock of leaving my cozy bed to hurry to the bathroom across a frozen, moonlit night, and the joy of returning to the warmth of my outdoor nest. (From the article)

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