



## A Shining

**Jon Fosse**

**Damion Searls, Translator**

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In Jon Fosse's novel *A Shining*, a walk in the forest leads to an inexplicable, supernatural experience.

Out of sheer boredom, a man goes for a drive and ends up lost in the forest on a snowy autumn night. There, strange encounters cause him to doubt his sanity. Unearthly lights, disembodied voices, and people who should not be there follow him through his aimless wandering, pulling him toward a destiny that became unavoidable from the moment he got into his car and turned on the engine.

The narrator's thoughts are just as rambling as the drive that led him to his current predicament. They are also, like his car, stuck in place: over and over, he reviews his situation, how it could have happened, and his dwindling options for getting out of it, all in one unending paragraph. Even as his circumstances change, his voice does not, carrying him through the most extraordinary visions and interactions.

Though the narrator reveals little about his own life, his introspection includes glimpses: he is a man with no passions or personal ties. He envisions his parents in the forest with him, and their interactions indicate that he had a fractious home life that may have influenced his cloistered adulthood. He is indecisive and an overthinker: even sitting on a rock is a nigh-insurmountable challenge that takes repeated consideration. This infuses his uncharacteristic decision to go for a drive with a sense of foreboding, as if something had made the choice for him. When he meets his inevitable fate in the cold of the forest, he is at least in the company of beings who, in their own way, seem to care about this lost and lonely figure.

*A Shining* is a stream-of-consciousness novel about a solitary man's final journey.

EILEEN GONZALEZ (November / December 2023)

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