

Periwinkle blue vastness

open as the ocean
shoreline to horizon as the world
drops off.

Expiring brown speckled,
xanthic teardrops
blotted with lingering pear green
are swept up by Fall's breaths
and untether from scantily clad trees
to dance and twirl and descend
slowly to wild red fescue blotched
and streaked with death.

A circular saw whines
to the beat of black walnuts
ricocheting on and off shingled
and tinned roofs. One cleaves
on impact, and the camphoraceous scent
of piney tangerine explodes
to compliment the earth's
musk as her floral epidermis
dormants and decays.

The leaves
chatter and whisper,
and the geese
trumpet nasally
as the arrowhead gaggles

fly away.

Nothing dies

if given (a) new life.

The swaying oak, maple, dogwood trees
undress auburn, crimson, saffron leaves
shaking off the heat
of summer.

The goldened rye, barley, wheat
fading and stiffening
preparing

for winter.

The jewel weed, red clover, chicory
less frequent(ing), wilting, fading
into dormancy having sustained pollinators,
most especially the bees.

The sun becomes the moon
there and back again
waxing waning dying rising

surviving thriving

but celebrating

Cardiac arrest

No one can break you/r heart
but you,
so please, my dear,
avoid the self harming;

when you are hurt, love yourself more
& treat yourself more gently,
that you might eschew injuring
your own heart.

Forgive yourself for the pain
you allowed in
and for the self infliction—
if you do find the vulnerability tearing
at the softened paper thin
walls of your heart once impermeable
and steadfastly indestructible

Children will be children

It is late afternoon
and school is out for summer.
I watch, unseen, three boys
slide down algae and spawn slick rocks
of the Taughannock creek

on their backsides.
They are young but old enough
to care what others think
but not yet old enough
to have unlearned this.
Here, they are uninhibited
as the cascading water fall-
ing and the turkey vultures fly-
ing overhead in a a clear cerulean sky
bleached by an incandescent sun.

After one more go,
the three boys scamper
up the embankment,
towards the road
and out of sight
to ride their bikes home.

Slightly more pigmented in sopping
gym shorts and graphic tees,
sons returning to (hopefully)
unscolding
mothers, fathers, guardians, families.

Used books

I appreciate

the marked pages
some decree sacrilegious.
She / he / they inked in
scribbled notes
and pink / blue / green highlighted sentences

Dog-eared
poems most resonating
underlined words
offering the most meaningful recapturing
of familiarity

in various ways:

a small fold here;

bottom left corner
brought to the inseam there;
a page in half and a tiny
fold facing one page back.

And one,
just one, sticky note
blank
and yellow.