

Survivor

I loved that birch, her graceful curve, bowed
earthward from the blizzard of ninety-six.
I saw a kind of courage in her work to lift
her crown again toward the canopy.

Now I grieve the empty space she filled,
the mound of fresh-cut rounds, her bark
whiter than the palest skin.

Flying

Just as I'm missing the birds
that have flown from the cold
and the yellow leaves twisting
in the wind, I see a girl of five
or six skipping down the street,
arms outstretched, hair blown wild,
flying in her heart.

Three-Legged Dog

More and more parts of her go missing.

She asks if I would rather lose my mind,
like her mother, or my body, like her.
I answer I'd rather not lose my wife.

There's just so much a man can take. Or give.

I watch a three-legged dog chase a ball
and wait for the phantom limb to land.

Helicopters: A Sept

I'm
searching
for meaning
today. Meanwhile
winged seeds spin
toward
earth.

The Bat

She yells at the walls of her small apartment, the ceiling, window, door. She feels trapped in her assisted living cell, she says, shut off from the world she loved, the life she lived.

Once a bat got in her room and flapped in frantic circles, desperate to escape. Oh, to have that sounding sense, to find one's way free again.