

For Cosmo, on his Suicide

We can sense that we are all
stories, whispered on the wind as leaves might murmur,
half in dreams.

Being a leaf instead would be simple:
We are as brief,
as pendulant, and
as autumn sighs nearer,
would sharpen more brightly the dull edges of words,
as if we could carve some sort of wakefulness
from long, smouldering sleep.

We line our words up, all
along the edges of our stories,
they run back streaming in the wind, out, behind.
They turn to colours we never intended,
as we slow, wandering,
in over our heads in our longer thoughts.
We toy with them idly
in seemingly idle moments,
tie them in rings,
tell them over and over secretly in church,
sort them down to neat, pretty, but impotent themes.
When frightened, desperate, or in despair,
we hack at them mindlessly,
opposing them with mere ferocity, or
with drugs, denial, prayer, work, art, abandon, play, sex,
kindness, cruelty, guilt, shame, regret, rage, confession,
whatever blades we can find
to cut away the demon face that just will not go away
for any price or penance.
Mostly though, we just pretend,
make stories that circle, or sometimes,
just end.

How easy in our wild, whispering woods to be snared,
fall, helpless, tangled in un-nameable dreads,
pains we have no names for -
voiceless, knotted in self-blame,
and unforgiving, not forgiven, and
begging for that promised, sacramental kiss,
from lips we cannot bear to face,
lose our way.