

Uncultivated

Blind, its face turned up,
Queen Anne's Lace nods

from dusty roadsides,
each white saucer

a constellation of smaller blossoms.
This common wild carrot

knows no friend. You can't
weep into it, it won't save you.

Silent witness to your fervid
summer, it can only burn

along side you, utter
the one word you long to hear.

The Falling Maple Leaves Entreat Cézanne

As footprints of the scattered nations,
principle of web and vein made flesh,
in numbers like rain we fall, crumble
onto earth's palette, vanish
into ourselves. But come
as apostle, take up our mission
of chrome yellow, knife onto canvas
the blood and salt of our lives
to soak cloth, wood, pear,
the very air.

Cicada

Seventeen years
underground, then

a long slow climb
through darkness,

the world
a kaleidoscope

of red, yellow
and green, the sun

a god—none
of which

the cicada knew
existed. Who

wouldn't leap
from that dark

tunnel, break out
of stiff armor,

soft body eager
to enter or be

entered. Who
wouldn't fly

to the tops
of trees, sing

until the world
was deafened

by urgency,
that long electric

eeeeooh, decibels
rising and falling

as new nymphs
drop from trees,

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litter the ground
with empty husks,

burrow in damp earth
to find again a beginning.

The Last of the Tomatoes

Not only leaves and degrees
and wormy apples fall but
something within begins to give.

Trees form a ragged border
around the yard, reach out to
each other across the fading blooms
of the small garden.

I wander through vegetable beds
which have collapsed inward
and are yawning
and scratching themselves
with their dried vines. But here are

two fat red tomatoes, swollen
with sweet and tangy juice,
held out on withered hands
that poke from cages, the future
embedded in gold-tinged seeds,
jubilant and defiant of the dark
and singing cold that is to come.

Hyla Crucifer

*Latin name for the spring peeper because
it carries the mark of a cross on its back.*

Black robes
flapping,
shoulders

hunched,
three crows
descend

on the bare tree,
shout *law*,
law law.

In the deep Easter
of the marsh
spring peepers

trill, lay eggs
in leafy muck,
answer *mercy*.