

IGNES FATUI

Latin for something deluding or misleading. Literal translation: "foolish fires."

What you've mistaken for a monocle
 is a dewdrop dangling from my eyelash.
And what you thought were semaphores
 zigzagging in the field last evening
was the pell-mell of newly winged angels.
 I play, *My Guitar Wants to Kill Your Mama*,
on a pyrite-plated kazoo, interchanging guitar
 with kazoo of course. Are you dazzled
by my caterpillar-skinned leotard?
 When I Watusi are you left breathless?
I am the wisteria under your window
 which you take as a slow fire engulfing
your house in purple and white flames.

DOUBLE CHERITA

mother's day

the disease
has taken her voice

through the phone
her quick breath
nursing home clatter

**

morning
rain

deleting
my mother's
number

out of my phone

PO CHU-I GOLDEN SHOVEL POEM

I cannot unlearn to swallow
honey-glazed peaches, call shadows
anything but, brother. I'll shake
boughs sugared with years of snow, toss out
the cat, shoo it homeward
to kin, offering in mouth. Beating wings.

SITTING AT A PICNIC TABLE AT THE QUABBIN RESERVOIR

Muddy bird prints on the pine-board top.
I want them to belong to eagles or hawks,
but convinced they're of duller feathers.

I'm unschooled in avian tracks,
but read that the Chinese alphabet
was inspired by fowl feet in snow.

There's a rustling behind a boulder
and from behind appears a ruffed grouse.
It clucks, pecks at the ground.

Shaped like a football awaiting kickoff,
it struts my way on three-pronged toes
that match the impressions on the picnic table.

I zoom-lensed skyward, scoped autumn canopy
for falcon, vulture, other birds of prey
and here in reddish and copper plumage,

the thing I tried to find in a raptor's soar,
hops next to me on the bench
and stares up with one brown eye.