

## If it Blew Away

Raven Jackson

The pale crimson moths know what grows here,  
under the tall tree that weeps yellow when the sun has dried its strewn edges  
And crinkled its rich body into shades of dead gray.  
Scattered cherry colored soil beneath my feet pauses,  
like a woman's breath does in the exact moment of birth—  
in the sealed silence before the life of another leaps into now.

What was, leaks into the insipidness of time.  
Coloring the dirt road that leads to the shed behind the little farmhouse.  
My head turns north when the cool breeze picks up,  
blowing an old birdhouse to the weathered ground. A lithe squirrel dashes  
through the browns and greens of the yard, chewing the dried shell of an earthworm  
then stopping a few yards away from me,  
staring.

Of course that wasn't you I say,  
looking into the dimly lit indolence  
waving in the air. I pull myself closer.

When I look back,  
a flicker before the parched mosquito  
bites my neck with its sticky mouth,  
I see four scarlet steps rolling in the dirt.  
Four paws  
trailing behind me.

The soil above you leaks into the air what once walked beside the hardness  
of the pavement. Four steps. Four paws.  
I sink my feet into the soil, the you, that leaks beneath my weep