

Landing

Today, the wind blows leaves
deliberately
from just one tree:
the yellow one
in your backyard
that is on fire
with sunlight.
You watch the leaves
cascade in streams—
Rapunzel's spun-gold tresses
spilling from her tower—

until one leaf
stops mid-fall,
as if gravity ceases to exist
in the tiny space that leaf occupies.
You are mesmerized
as it twirls eye-level
like an amber-winged fairy
suspended by invisible thread.
You know there is a scientific explanation
for the leaf's hesitation—
it has been caught up in
a cross-current—

but this, rather, is a crossroads, a
threshold;
you are on the brink of something,
altering the place
you would have settled,
because this leaf
reminds you
of what eye contact feels like—
the *real* kind:
when your surroundings disappear
and those eyes you're peering into
become new worlds.

All at once,
the wind changes direction;
it simply *shifts*,
releasing its captive.
You watch as the leaf makes
its graceful descent
before landing on the terrain
of a new season,
and you know, just as the leaf does,
the answer
is in the letting go.

Autumn's Death

My smile hangs on his like autumn's last leaf
rebellious against winter's bitter bite.
He shakes, shedding and crunching under feet
our season's remains while I sit tonight
watching his cheeks flush as he pours her wine.
He does not see me: bare limbs soon forget
the weight of leaves; his freedom wraps like vines
around her waist, choking mine into regret
that splits like brittle twigs when they embrace—
arms like careless branches, entwined and free,
her naked hands climbing his naked face—
My smile bends like a weeping willow tree.
He leaves with her; his shadow holds the door
and goodbye falls like acorns to the floor.



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Origami Poetry Project

Leaves Fall
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