

WINTER WEIGHT

Trees like blown glass sculptures glitter
and with winter weight
weighed, slump like weeping willows.

Ice freezes in droplets,
golden echoes of oil beads
from Grandma's lamp.

A gray squirrel
skitters across the snow
at the crunch of my boots.

I show up early
with two bottles of Sweet Belle,
the black torchiere lamp on low,
T.V. off.

In the kitchen sweet cinnamon pumpkin
mingles with tomato sauce.
I used to be a scarlet teenager,
but now I'm a single candle
burning between two wine glasses,
smoke rising like music notes.

We yearn for nature's return
like we earlier yearned for fall's fire.

We long to see the orchard blossom,
the berry clusters hanging in bushes like bells.
We fear forgetting the brown thrasher's everlasting song,
the yellow-bellied sapsucker's meow,

watching the tree swallow change
from blue to green in the sunlight.

We hope and whisper
as the whippoorwill wanes.



—Amanda Shrader