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journey down the sky. One lingering flock forms a flotilla gliding upon the placid water where green depths mirror limbs of overhanging trees. Raptors ride the updrafts, rising, reaching, dipping.... Leaves drift to earth. River diamonds flash to fire in the crackling light.

— Rae Marie Zimmerling

WINTER'S COMING

Moldering, the ground thickly littered with trodden leaves wet with decay the bright colors of early autumn quickly reduced to inky-slick black slime the harbinger of shortened days and longer, lonelier nights.

— Jan Bono

READIN' AND WRITIN' AND...

"Welcome Back to School" stapled across the bulletin board in hand-cut letters eight inches tall made from autumn-brown construction paper. The wall display is bordered with yellow, orange, and red leaves, mimicking Canadian maple, each sporting a child's name printed neatly in the center. Soon the children who match these names will fuss and tumble noisily into the classroom, bringing with them final remnants of a summer too short. But today the teacher sits smiling quietly at the empty chairs relishing the last moments before a new school year erupts in laughter and lessons.

— Jan Bono

REQUIEM

One leaf fell in awe-filled silence fluttering to my feet. How sad the trumpets did not blow announcing fall's return. Sadder still the harsh sound it made moldering on the ground.

— Jan Bono

HISTORY LESSON

The first October outside a classroom in 47 years, counting from kindergarten straight through to retirement, I flew to Philadelphia, boarded a motor coach, and took the scenic route to Quebec and back with 95 other senior citizens on a Fall Foliage Tour. I was totally unprepared for the vibrant leaf colors, the taste of raw maple syrup just a few feet from the trees, and surprised by my tears standing on Lexington Green reading the words engraved on an unassuming boulder: "If there's to be a war, let it begin here."

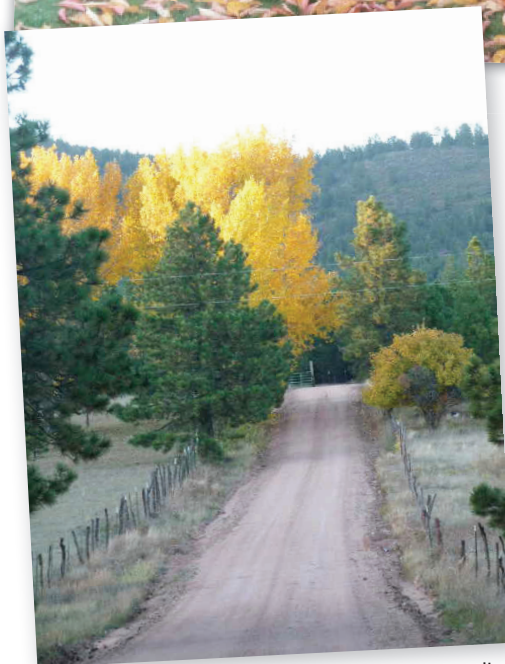
— Jan Bono

AUTUMN APPLES

I love Autumn, this many splendored season. Call me Nature Boy. So glad I didn't write, "I love the Fall." Think Original Sin: Adam and Eve. But they got the apple right, didn't they? Was it a Fall Fuji she bit into? No, of course not, Silly. The Bible said it was Delicious!



Kathleen Dudley



Kathleen Dudley

— Anthony Pfannenstiel

AUTUMN'S LOSS

Autumn is your reminder You must let go Of summer's acquisitions Lest Winter's accusations Convict you of hoarding. Autumn says "Let go." Spring's seed bore fruit. Summer's bounty has been consumed. Now is time to reap harvest. Before Leaves lose their colors Or Trees drip with loss.

— Anthony Pfannenstiel

The wind is blowing from the east Tree tops swaying with new found purpose Temperature plummeting to say the least Golden

leaves covering the lawns surface The skies are filled with heavy clouds Darkness coming at an alarming rate Birds fleeing in synchronized crowds Those left behind will have to acclimate It's hard to say what the future will hold Only thing I can speculate with confidence Is the promise of winters cold Summers decline is rather ominous

— Joshua Blomquist

AUTUMN FALLS

summer's heat holds on afternoons in full sun with no breeze Spiders have taken on insect control since the swallows glided south without notice eleven gnats snagged in a tangle web, one yellow-jacket bound in an orb web, dozens of fruit flies forever bedded on a sheet web by the com-post final feasts before egg making Maples yellow their winged seeds whirl down to cover yards, clog gutters the grass stays green, our hens still lay a few blackberries may yet ripen as the dark, held at bay since spring, swallows more light each day

— Jim Dott

Deer and the Apples

Autumn chill at 3AM, a motion detector floods light on three does, a fawn, and a young buck all munching apples dropped by the wind storm, kings the size of softballs, two make a pie, the quarter moon waxes a shine on the fruit scattered and wet with the temptation of summer, sweetened

for the harvest, a neighbor's tree barren 10 years until one glorious autumn of cider, sauce, butter, and bread, food for the coming freeze, and on the far side of the field, my neighbor smokes a rolled American Spirit orange tip punctuates the dark, camouflaged by shadows, he sits on a plastic chair inside his carport, and levels his Winchester 30-30.

— John Ciminello

Autumn

In the evening light, on our walk from the South Berm to the parking lot, you say, "I'm not afraid of time and I'm not asking for much." My silence has no sense of direction, the brown grass, brittle and stiff, swishes on our pant legs, and the geese point their honkers south. Our breath rattles like leaves and I button the top of my jacket, almost time to leave with so much left unsaid, I shove my hands deeper into my pockets as a westerly chill passes through our regrets and chases away all our summer intentions.

— John Ciminello

Prime of October — Trick or Treat

On the prime of October like wind in the trees, the playful awaken in the shuffling leaves, and a migration arises like the dawn

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