
Richard Taylor

Richard Taylor is a professor of English and currently Kenan Visiting Writer at Transylvania University. A former Kentucky poet laureate, Taylor is the author of numerous collections of poetry, novels, and works of non-fiction focusing on Kentucky history. A former dean and teacher in the Governor's Scholars Program, he was selected as Distinguished Professor at Kentucky State University in 1992. He and his wife own Poor Richard's Books in Frankfort, Kentucky.

Taylor graduated from the Brandeis School of Law at the University of Louisville in 1967 and practiced for a brief few months with the firm of Hogan, Taylor, Denzer, and Bennett, before leaving the firm and returning to graduate school to study English. He continued, for a time, to put his law degree to use to help war protesters and doing divorces for friends. Taylor's father, brother, niece, and three children all have law degrees. One of his son's practices in New York City; a daughter is staff attorney in the Franklin Circuit Court in Frankfort, Kentucky.

Acknowledgments

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RICHARD TAYLOR

Field Sparrows

Rising and lighting,
then rising again.
From snowpatch to snowpatch
probing the thickets for seeds.

Now a dozen scored in fence-grids
outside my window.
Wing wed to wing,
they dart to some cue
quilled deep in the feather.

As if each
preserved in its beak
a corner of some inevitable quilt—
the stitching, a saga of sparrows
or a history of hawks.

Letter to David Orr

– Cloverport, Kentucky

Thank you for showing me
the cane today,
the tall patch near Goose Creek
a parking lot will cover soon.

Hunkered in this shade-mesh,
space closed by stalks
ten feet and higher,
chill wind shushing through
a thousand spear-shaped leaves,
it all comes back.

Tales where Boone laid up
outfoxing Indians,
Cherokees who twined the fibers
to hold shelled corn.
Stands that fattened buffalo
and kept the Bluegrass
spare of trees.

These jaunts we take
to scraps of virgin timber,
to beds of fossil coral
at the Falls,
picking blueberries
one handful frail as air
on Big Black Mountain—
this lust to get
the primal girth of things,
it strikes me finally why:

to reconstruct an unconstructed
state,
the touchy balance of a dozen
hardwoods we might measure by
before we dwindled,
so that as we fall
our hands might judge the rings.

Bluegrass Parkway

Above the vetch
which holds the slanting gravels
to their banks,
the cuts
where seas are sliced
from fossil rock,

are stands of scrub
the highway people plant
to keep the status quo,
the touchy boulders
napping on their slopes,
the rains from gouging
canyons in the clay.

Along this bluff
where hardpan ripens into woods
are flowering dogwoods,
dwarfed natives
which the blue pines veto,
their upturned leaf-ends
tipped toward sun,
the gagged white blossoms
wangling bits of sky.

Sparse this spring
the dogwoods plead for light.
The limbs twist up
in spits of crumpled speech,
each purple twig,
each scrolled white petal
eloquently refuting the evergreens.

**Along the Bluegrass Parkway
in Early Spring**

Lulled as the hills slide by,
my eye follows the stripe
of torch-shaped cedars
that jag along the embankment
mile after mile after mile.

Each forms a shaggy cone
with bristles that rise
dark as the undersides
of waves, tactile as fur.

Then, prying between the bushy
crowns, redbuds spray into view.
Against the dingy conifers,
the pallid slopes, they detonate
in geysers of light, petals liquid
and pink as a calf's tongue.

Long after the landscape flattens,
they hover in the mind:
pink fretwork lit in bright
swatches, pushy branchlets
reared by fluxions of light
and native inclination.

**A Prescription for Coping with the
Next Millennium
in One Sentence or Less**

With no known remedy
for the millennial jitters
in all its predications
of planetary doom—
cyber glitches, jinxed aircraft,
unchartable tides of giddy
rapture, and global warming
that simmers to a cosmic boil—

I improvise as I go, having
tailored no special strategy
to survive digital disruption,
seismic rumblings, or sudden
shifts of psychic ballast

other than to tighten the laces
on my sneakers and take careful
sightings from one landmark
to the next—a pond, a melon patch,
or just another feathery ridge—

inching toward
the Great Millennial Divide
at a pace one savvy neighbor,
a genius at disencrypting
contradictory signs, describes
as a 'passionate mosey.'

Severn Creek

– for Gray Zeitz
of Larkspur

For the third spring we trek
the disused county road,
deer prints pressing ground
made soft by yesterday's showers.
In gray tiers, hardwoods rise up
toward the cedared bluffs.
The luscious glut of creekwater
riffles through us intimate as breath.

It's early. Spring spurs its lime
among the branchtips—not yet
an exclamation. The trout lily
has performed its bloom,
but the Dutchman's-breeches
are still furled like silken flags.
Fire pinks still smolder
hours shy of floral combustion,
the beds of bluebells
we hiked miles to see
already basking in the bottoms.

As we pass a bank of larkspurs,
each spiked floret asserting
its purple integrity, its tensile grace,
Gray, inspired, declares this occasion
the annual meeting of his board.

With a simple show of hands
the membership, each sprig, each
spacious leaf, reaffirms its policy
to vegetate the hills,
following by-laws to the letter
with each corporate tendril,
each dash of color, as we all assent
to raise, to resurrect, the dead.

**Living Where the Water
Doesn't Come**

The rest of the county
ties on to city water,
and the tank-truck haulers
call it quits, careering down
the drive in boas of ochereous dust.
We become scholars of dearth,
rain scouts, frugal bathers.

Out of the subdivision loop—
beyond that oasis of twirling
sprinklers and manic ablutions—
we adapt to cycles of vapor
and downpour that waver unreliably
between too little and too much.

Dearth we come to know
as just another station on the map
of human longing, somewhere
south of envy, north of grief.

Dry and getting dryer, we dream
the hydrophiliac's dream:
of copia, fullness, a watery hoard
of liquid plenty that gushes
through the downspouts,
tops the cistern, and peters out
just jiggers short of flood.

**The Abolitionist Cassius Clay
Steps Briefly out of His Memoirs
During a Severe Drought**

Under this cobalt sky
that holds not one rumor,
one smudge of moisture,
the 'Lion of White Hall' revives.
Not the duelist, soldier, diplomat,
but his wavery shadow,
an old man in his eighties armed
with only a small brass cannon
against the twin demons
of loneliness and despair.

Twice divorced, shunned
by his surviving children,
sequestered in an empty house—
a thirty-room fortress in which
he nurses his parched spirit.
He makes the best of exile,
his beard and uncut hair graying
'with the frost which never melts.'

During the day he keeps society
with flowers and shrubs.
He gathers about him 'dogs
and pigeons and barnfowls'—
even the 'mute fishes.'
A bird cage hangs from the sweetgum
under which he reads Plutarch
or Stowe, a crumb-box
nailed to the window ledge.

Each night he swings open
his bedroom shutters
to draw in the bats, consoled,
exhilarated, as they flit about
snatching flies from the wall plaster.
His greatest pleasure, their fluttering
wingbeats, 'life, life!'

**Closing out the Millennium
with a Bonfire in Elkhorn Bottom**

Against these wooded hills, this pod of dark,
against the cold that weasels through
out bootsoles, we stack drift and rotting
fenceposts. As the first flames flicker,
catch, then climb the trussworks limb
by limb, the old conversion works its spell-
from substance into dissipating fumes.
Bakes in front, freezing back, we huddle
toward the candescent core where embers
breathe their own small breaths. The numb
blood passing through us joins the circuitry
of deadfalls, glowing ash, this womb of heat
& light we've piled against the century's dark.
Near as we dare, we inch closer to the coals.

RICHARD TAYLOR

Cattle Song

Nathan Banks, a 22 year old student at Purchase College, painted single words on the flanks of about 60 cows near his upstate New York home, then let them wander around to see if they could compose poetry.

— Associated Press

Outside my window I see lettered angus
on the hillside composing pastorals,
cantos to clover, a haiku whose theme
this July morning is sweet surrender
to the dark cove of an encompassing oak,
a deep draught of rainwater in a silver tank.

From my own skirmishes with words,
I know, odds are, most tries will fail.
The calf will stand on wobbly legs.
The field of sweet grass stiffens into frost.
One moo will echo every other moo.

Still, watching, I imagine a taut-uddered
genius, a Holstein Homer maybe,
a moony Sappho whose words take
on life down some trackless cowpath
the reader never dares to wander.

Now, as the grazers bunch, break off, and roam,
I try to sequence them into sense, to herd
them whole like some dismantled sonnet,
fragmented script of some language lost
that they, that we, will never understand.

One Fine Day at September's End

The neighbor I greet at Kroger's
with what a beautiful day it is
says, "Yeah, good for fishing,"
angling his laden cart toward checkout.

Though I don't fish, I feel the lure
that pulls him, imagining the sun
that splays across the pool
in Elkhorn Creek, ample, umber,
in perfect balance with the ragged hem
of blue shadow along its banks.

Then I remember the email
I must wade through at the office:
the group excuse for student athletes,
a cheery reminder that the handbook
committee will meet at eleven,
a frittata of flavorless memos
that will not unscramble into sense,
their vagueness abundantly vaguer
than the terrace of riffles downstream
scored with silver furrows.

At the meeting, sinking in my seat,
I can almost sense sunlight
on my cheek. As the agenda hovers,
I ponder the endless variations
in constancy by which water
weaves and unweaves itself,
O sweet Penelope!,
The flow of current over stones,
the algae hugging those stones—

opening, reading *that* mail.

Intuition

As my eyes thread the beads
of type across the page,
something wallops the morning,
claps the stillness with a salvo.

Even while weighing likely causes—
gunshot, lightning, backfire, wind,
a road crew blasting rock—I know
not only that a tree has fallen

but which tree: the silver maple
in the shadow of the smokehouse,
sparsely leafed, arthritic,
its stiff ribs crumpled into punk.

As I step out on the porch,
I confirm what the inner eye
already sees: the splayed trunk,
a blitz of disarticulated limbs,

an unprecedented brightness
in place of substance, form—
its familiar splint of upthrust bark,
some mists of radiating green.

All day I puzzle over this tendril
of mind that twines itself
to this moment's stem
as some unaccountable knowing

like the sensors of Canadian geese
from National Geographic that wing up
from the river slough before disaster,
seconds before the surface furrows.

The mudflats quake with explosions
that detonate that other nether world
and telegraph the message home,
this maple splintered on the lawn.

Water Hauling on Sunday Morning

Pulling onto Coffeetree Drive
near the pumping station
to draw my weekly load,
I scan for residential deer,
spotting three in scruffy woods
a stone's throw off the hardtop.

Tame, safe on posted ground,
two do not bother
to lift their stretched necks.
Only one, an edgy doe, swivels
her tapered head and stares,
eyeing my credentials.

Calmed, she turns back toward
the browsers on legs as tense,
as frail, as wickets.
I speak no language to tell her
open season starts Saturday, no
code to tap out muffled thunder
that will thrum the hills.

Instead, as the craned pipe spews
white pillars downward in the tank,
I watch the water rise
and hear myself intone
above the shushing swirl
inside the void,
"Lie low next week, stay close."
This Sunday ritual is my church,
these deer my stony habitat of hope.

Impedagogy

**Experts tell us that only thirty percent
of any class at any time is actually listening.**

**During an exposition of Nietzsche's slave morality
or the intricacies of the comma splice, students**

**fantasize about pepperoni and extra mozzarella,
someone's cleavage two desks down,**

**the next episode of *The Young and the Restless*.
Towards fall and spring breaks, reception flags,**

**like the ailing radio in my son's geriatric Honda,
always on but only sometimes receiving.**

**cutting off or on each time we hit a bump.
Opening and slamming the driver's door,**

**I can revive the stray signals, the fragile contact,
as sound waves bustle in the corridors of air.**

**Restoring reception in class is not so certain
as I jar the dozers with direct address,**

**transmit thunder by means of the augering eye.
Compared, the cardoor by far is more reliable.**

In Defense of Letters

— for Gray Zeitz

From his farm near Braintree, John Adams
wrote that unless he kept a journal
the events of his life passed like flights
of birds across his vision, leaving no trace.

Filling my water tank at the pump station
this cold November morning, I scan the bluffs
of the Kentucky, trees along the steep slopes
reduced to featherless quills, to walls of

anonymous mulch the color of dried tobacco.
Thirty-four pigeons I count huddled along the
twin power lines that droop and join
at the river's edge. They remind me of fonts

of type lifted from the printer's tray,
their inked spines pressed into the chaste
snow of the page, John Adams' migrant
and elusive birds nestling on the wires.

Imagining My Own Death

I can envision many deaths—
stumbling into the cistern
on a July evening after too much
chilled Zinfandel, crickets clicking
their symphonies in the grass.
This is only one of them.

Or, instead of Pliny the Elder
sniffing a fatal whiff
of smoking casserole under Vesuvius,
standing in my own backyard
under the white throat
of a colossal sycamore that snaps
while I ponder the genealogy
of snow or a word to describe
the sounds of falling water.

But the worst is sitting
in a meeting of the sub committee
for administrative review
convened to measure the efficiency
of systems and processes,
the sands of the hourglass
sifting into a Mojave
of lost time, irrecoverable moments,
the turning of thousands
of tiny wheels that produce
motion but no movement.

Vigilante

At the stoplight a Ford van idles
next to me, the customized letters
“Bob’s Upholstery” stenciled
in yellow across its side panel.

Running down his list of services,
I fight an urge to boost the shaky reign
of proper usage, wet my finger,
and hop out to add an “e” to “couchs.”

Even in borrowed books I feel compelled
to circle misspelled words, suture
misprints, to etch my scarlet letters
onto some zonked-out student’s *tabula rasa*.

Each scrawl of my touchy ballpoint
honors the memory of fallen legions
of high school English teachers, crusaders
who tangled with the dangling participle

and migratory commas, stood tall
against the lusty empire of slang.
No matter how I try to set aright
my own imperfect texts, errors crop up

like new stones in ploughed fields,
unearthed each time the cultivator passes.
Though the lords of misrule trash
each meadow of promising prose,

I edit on, imagining the heaven
of grammarians as a Victory Garden
without weeds, hell as verbal blight,
a spreading rash of *anything goes*.

Orthography

In the snowy by ways of my gradebook I
collect notations misspellings,
kinky syntax, verbal screw ups
that send an unintended message.

In this shadowland of gist and meaning,
this republic of free expression,
George Washington Carver becomes
the founder of peanut butter,
Emily Dickinson's "Wild Nights"
reviles the desire for another person.
Picasso becomes Pacisso, and Aristotle
tells us not to do anything to access.

Commenting on the clasp of the Twin Towers,
someone philosophizes that some folks
bring others down just to bigger themselves.
We lack a code of ethnics.
One student writes of falling into a comma.
To my office door another attaches a post it,
hoping his absence didn't cause any incontinence.

If balance turns on whether the world
inside our heads matches the one outside it,
if all my students are living their lives
to the fullest intent and holding tenants
and writing about a grandfather
lying in a dead bed dying of gang green,
and no one willingly takes a vowel of silence,
I wonder about the fate of grammar, of nations—
just who the next president will be.

RICHARD TAYLOR

Rain Shadow

Guanacaste, Costa Rica

From the black volcanic tip
of the isthmus' highest mountain
we can survey, east and west,
two bodies of water
separated only by a narrow bench
of green and two ribbons of white surf
where the waters lap but never join.

One side of the mountain
is drenched and verdant, a riot of green—
its plush canopy unbroken for miles—
the other parched by what meteorologists
call rain *shadow*, its barren slope
arid with elfin thickets of stunted growth
that thirst in sullen expectation.

This divide also delineates
the wide continent of the heart,
the razory spine of loving/not loving.

Mortar

Wedded to its parapet,
locked into its arrested geometry,
the brick knows the loneliness of company.

Masonry

**Why is it that so few things
give so much pleasure
as finding a perfect hollow
in which to fit an imperfect stone?**

The Two Lonelinesses

There is the lesser loneliness of pulling
into the drive toward a darkened house,
cutting the engine and listening
to tiny pings as the engine cools
and settles itself to sleep.

There is the deeper loneliness
of Kafka and Sartre and Kierkegaard,
of Kate Chopin's *The Awakening*
when Edna Pontellier strips
and steps into the Gulf,
fixing her eye on a horizon point
that can only be described as distant.

Infatuation

Our human version of a false spring
in which shoots, precocious, green,
prod through the heart's crust
to ignite the gray with yellow promise—
confused jonquils whose blooms
will be blanketed by snow,
choked by manacles of frost.

**An Old Friend Muses on Whether
She Slept with a High School Flame
Fifty Years Ago**

'You know, when you're seventeen,
you're driving so fast
it's hard to take in all the scenery.'

Deliverance

*Be kind to everyone you meet,
for we are all fighting a great battle.*

—Philo of Alexandria

Finding two moths—cousins of those
that gnawed the shoulder off the jacket
I wear to weddings and funerals—
trapped on my screened-in porch this morning,
wings batting against the tiny grids,
agitated like prayer flags before a storm—
I cup one, then the other, in the haven
of my hands, ushering each past
the door jamb into unencumbered air—
in releasing them, releasing all of us.

Order

The small pleasures of tidying up,
moving a chair slightly to align
with others along the table's lip,
ordaining certain things for certain places,
pencils laid out in the coffin of a drawer,
caps on their designated pegs.
The satisfaction of controlling small bits
of matter in a world
teetering toward randomness and decay,
a consolation as nature continues
its flirtation with mutation and tilt:
the apple wobbling on its stem,
the waters rising at our feet.

Destination

Having read this morning
that when a man dies
what remains is only his shadow,
today I take special notice
of the red-shouldered hawk
seen almost every morning
as I drive to work.

Hunched on a power line,
wings hugging its feathery self,
tail ruddering currents of wind,
it oversees a pantry of fields,
its patient vigil bedded in certainty.

Farther along the road, another appears,
this one flying not with the shepherd's knot
of a black snake in its talons
but lifting with purposeful wings,
its tips mean and jagged as a bowsaw.

Not yet, I comfort myself, free of shadow
as I sight down the cautionary thread
of blacktop, white stripes
sucking under my pedaled foot,
Mozart bringing what's inside to order.

Not yet, I say to my knuckles on the wheel,
to the quiltwork of field and fence beyond.
Not yet to the road ahead as it tapers into
the distant treeline, a muzzy blueness.

In Defense of Letters

—for Gray Zeitz

From his farm near Braintree, John Adams
wrote that unless he kept a journal
the events of his life passed like flights
of birds across his vision, leaving no trace.

Filling my water tank at the pump station
this cold November morning, I scan the bluffs
of the Kentucky, trees along the steep slopes
reduced to featherless quills, to walls

of anonymous mulch the color of dried tobacco.
Thirty-four pigeons I count huddled along
the twin power lines that droop and join
at the river's edge. They remind me of fonts

of type lifted from the printer's tray,
their inked spines pressed into the page's
chaste snow, John Adam's migrant
and elusive birds nestling on the wires.

Blemishes

At breakfast Lizz asks about
the rosette gouged into my forearm
and the squiggly comma scored
across my wrist like a carpenter's mark.

I explain how yesterday,
as I wrenched the jammed window,
one stressed pane crazed and razored
from the sash in assassin's daggers.

As I spoon my last soggy oats,
the more critical Muse of Imperfections
rises to catalog flaws in other spots,
starting with a cold sore on my lower lip.

She finds a rash along the mirror,
then whole gardens of rust floescence
described as *foxing* that bloom
among the pages of my leather books.

Outside the window, bird droppings
scrawl their lime calligraphy
over the Toyota's hood, a muddled text
that won't render up its message.

Imagining My Own Death

I can envision many deaths—
stumbling into the cistern
on a July evening after too much
chilled Zinfandel, crickets clicking
their symphonies in the grass.
This is only one of them.

Or, instead of Pliny the Elder
sniffing a fatal whiff
of smoking casserole under Vesuvius,
standing in my own backyard
under the white throat
of a colossal sycamore that snaps
while I ponder the genealogy
of snow or a word to describe
the sounds of falling water.

Or maybe improvising illumination
with a Lucifer match
as I crouch in darkness
searching for the petite geyser
escaping from a gas pipe.

Migrations

Weighted with the day's minutia—
this memo done, that test graded—
I drive home from work,
rising out of the floodplain
through billows of roadside trees
toward the crest of the hill
to find what solace there is.

As my tires crunch onto gravel,
the maples erupt with starlings,
a cloud so dense it blots the sky,
thousands of jagged wings bursting
off their roosts like shrapnel,
dark alphabets exploding off the page.

When I cut the engine, again they light,
settling into a clump of walnuts
behind the house. Their feathering
is like the suspiration of a thousand breaths,
another small wonder in which to marvel.
When they put down their wings,
I feel the unsupportable weight of each limb
bending under its load, our burdens shifting.

Intuition

As my eyes follow the beads
of type across the page,
something wallops the morning,
claps the stillness with a salvo.

Even while weighing likely causes—
gunshot, lightning, backfire, wind,
a road crew blasting rock—I know
not only that a tree has fallen

but which tree: the silver maple
in the shadow of the smokehouse,
sparsely leafed, arthritic,
its stiff ribs crumpled into punk.

As I step out on the porch,
I confirm what the inner eye
already sees: the splayed trunk,
a blitz of disarticulated limbs,

an unprecedented brightness
in place of substance, form—
its familiar splint of upthrust bark,
some mists of radiating green.

Expectation

Lifting boards from old lumber
piled under a tarp in the side yard
to stack them in the garage,
I turn up the ghost skin of a snake—
sheer as tracing paper, indescribably fragile.

And raising another gray board
to expose the thing itself,
a whip-end of tail and a swatch
of yellow patterning on one fat flank,
reticulated skin the color of gunmetal.

Then witnessing its length
as if pouring into itself,
oozing out of sight to another level
where I find it nestled in an alley
between two planks, reddish Y
of its tongue twitching from its slit.

And so on,
raising new roof after new roof
until nearly reaching bare earth
and bleached strands of wispy grass,
both of us waiting to see what happens
when I pick up the last board.

**While Searching for a Funeral Poem
to Read for a Friend's Infant Daughter**

On the sunporch I find the forgotten amaryllis,
marooned in its ceramic boat.
Through winter I watered it as a nurse
might smooth creases from the sheet
of a dying patient, more gesture
than green hope, a stay against guilt.

Now, not one but three gaudy trumpets
blare from the top of its sabery stem,
crimson pinstripes against a sullied white,
a tarnished-collar white of a shirt
too often or too seldom worn.

Upright, elegant, aloof in the manner of Modigliani's
long-necked models—mysterious, mute—
it stands as a composite of the world
we know as much as it can be known,
cradle and coffin, resurrection and bloom.

Grief

—for Deb and Jim Gash

It has snowed overnight,
and two friends have lost their son
There is a new radiance
in the snow-reflected light,
a new sharpness to the cold.
Outside the window
the stalks of the hydrangea
shiver, each wand bending
under its stripe of snow.
They seem to chafe in dissent.
They waver but persist.
As we do.
All there is left to do now
is put more flax seed in the feeder.

Losing Friends

—for Jean Zeitz

Like summer swifts that nest
in my chimney and dart
in the airways above my rooftop,
zigging and zagging
as they consume many times
their weight in insects,
each jag in their flight
adding to what becomes a lifetime's feast
as they scrawl and complicate the clouds.
Then, toward the last day of fall,
answering to some calendar,
some clock or bite in the thermal
we can never precisely predict
or reckon, they vanish, nervous
apostrophes erased from the sky,
joining the great migration south.

Resurrection

Early to bed after hours of mindless labor,
I wake to a drone of thunder
and then a shower, tentative at first,
that heightens to a steady downpour.

Listening to the thousand murmurings
of rain that language has no words for,
I debate whether to get up, trudge down,
and set my hanging ferns outside.

Sometimes, I confess, I forget to water.
Should I leave them high and dry
so that I may sleep,
let my own inertia stand between them
and a salutary soaking?

I could vow rescue in the morning,
knowing chances of a holding rain
are meager, that water from a spout is not
the same, just doesn't sate

the thirst of plants with the efficiency
and even-handedness of rainfall,
won't raise every limp leaflet, each craning
stalk to new alertness, to dutiful attention.

The Way of Things

It is a restaurant whose trade
is steady, not rushed.
half the tables taken,
half vacant, the room enlivened
by a constant murmur
that does not surface into sense,
broken by small pauses, a laugh
from deep in the cavern of the throat—
nothing theatrical, nothing shrill.
You are in deep conversation
with someone who means something to you.

From time to time you look up
to see that one table is empty,
a new one occupied.
Your server comes by
to ask if you would like more bread,
your coffee warmed, the dessert menu.

And you have said all that needs to be said.
And the coffee at the bottom of the cup
has puddled, muddy and cold.
And life in the form of presences
and absences goes on in this way.

Thanksgiving

Called outside before the feast,
we find a red-tailed hawk
in the front yard
without ceremony or pretense
devouring a gray squirrel,
realizing that for some of us,
all of us, each day is thanksgiving.