

Seasonal Memoir

i.

we hunched our shoulders and shook fingers
straining to see each other through air
both crystalline and opaque. Like jello,
clouded with fruit juice (which would explain the shaking).

Walked to school my nose in a book,
focusing only on
(autumn wind peppered me with leaves).
I was ready to turn the page. Or maybe,

it was my undoing, what ruined everything.
The way water can be drought or flood,
but doesn't depend on point of view. No,
it's flowing; try and stay. Well, you can try.

ii

The cat was a threat. As softly as it jumped
and landed on the windowsill, the shadow
of nineteen fifty-six woke hissing.
The guest room always stood empty

because “had been there” was where
the rebar was buried – foundation, lattice.
My sister and I –
No matter how we grew and clung,

we were still simple annuals.
We are talking time as an animal,
an inadequate supply of batteries,
a box of crochet thread so old, it easily breaks and ravel.

Generations of mice in lollipop heaven,
feeding on the dog biscuit prom-corsage.
Got there just as they were discarding the last wrapper,
just as the last Romeo was buttoning his jeans.

iii

The finches have learned the lessons of a star.
Love alone - the slow deliberate twining
of grass into nest lined with thistledown
and strands of tabby hair, trip after trip

to the seed feeder stuffing red-gaped
baby frogmouths, a singer closing his beak
so his son can bubble and stutter in squeaky
practice trills - love alone will not

satisfy a thwarted sun. He turns
and chills the North with bitter, bloodshot eye.
Restless in his malice, they take to wing. Wheel
one circle above the yard and fly on south.

The fledglings follow or fall.

iv

The moon's thinking of leaving too.
Daily she suffers, pallid in the sky
low below the horizon rounding
herself pleasantly, trying to glow,
but clearly ignored. Even at night
people prefer cathode rays
bright and arced with story. She
just can't blurt out all
she feels. Instead her story takes
a month, as told by nibbling mice.
Her craters smile as she wastes away,
then waxes again, gaining premenstrual pounds.