

Summer 1992

Intimations in Waterville

Peter Harris

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Intimations in Waterville

The maple is green when the Ghost arrives.

—Li Po

Last night, the air too close, too full of August
for making love, we cooled ourselves with home
videos of scintillating June, our daughter
lifting pailfuls of her wading pool up
to the sun, dousing herself in liquid silver
until, sated, she suddenly rose, bearing
a full pail to gift the green tomatoes,
joy pouring from her as an unhaltered breeze
limbered the finer branches of the mountain ash.

A mile away that day, the first red foxes
appeared in the rough to watch golf balls
arc through summer near their lairs—all eyes,
vaulted to kinship with alien moments of grace.

This morning it dawns cool, the first foretaste.
I read in the paper the foxes have been trapped,
deported, for unnerving highstrung handicaps
with stares, deadpan from the sweetgrass and the pines.
It breaks on me again, like a remnant swell
from an offshore storm, how my summers are

going, vanishing into the earth like rainfall,
rising from it in vapors invisible as
my daughter's breath that day she lifted pailful
upon pailful from the pool, emptied it to feed
the young tomatoes, the ones that darkened last night
from orange to red, the ones we'll eat today.