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The Crux of Weather Changing

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MELISSA KWASNY

The Crux of Weather Changing

After a week of shimmering, the cottonwood leaves turn and enter the body triumphant. Then, the snow comes, two feet of it. How this time of year makes a world and the world makes a room and we are here, in close proximity to perception. Driving at night, snow swirling across the road, as if we were skimming across thin ice, speeding above a barely concealed current. A woman is losing her hold on the earth. She tells the same story again, throwing her hands in the air to show how she flung ashes into the sea, to show us how the big dog almost knocked her back. It is true that we abjure serenity, not that we have learned to disdain peace, simply that the measure of a good life is one of tension—the light already departing when we wake. Old friend again back from your separate journey, may we celebrate it in some quiet, hand-held way: crown white, heartwood red, center of the changing tree green and gold.