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Intimations in Waterville

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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.