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Leaving

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Leavings

Karen Webb Owen

I remember trees:

Black Walnut

My husband liked the tree,
tall and old with wide branches
reminding him of the dark wood
he'd once shaped into a puzzle,
given to me before we married.
It dropped its sticky resin on the car,
once even denting its roof with the hard nuts,
stolen by noisy squirrels each fall who
left insulting piles of hulls all over the yard.
He's prune it carefully, keeping the wood
wishing he could dry it and work it properly,
showing us the beautiful heart wood.
Lately it has dropped branches in the driveway
and sullenly torn a shingle from the garage roof.
The branches droop low, as if mourning.
I find its offspring in unexpected parts of the yard,
sprouting like memories.

Norway Maple

Once my son's favorite,
providing yellow leaves to pile
into golden mounds for October birthday parties.
His swing set was a getaway to its branches.
Boys would roost there like crows, shouting,
then race off to eat mulberries.
The mulberry fell in a storm;
weeds hae replaced the swings.
If the weeds were replaced with a bench,
I don't know if he'd return.
I don't know even if this is the tree
he hid in when his father died.