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After the First Frost

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Leyrer: After the First Frost
AFTER THE FIRST FROST

Adam Leyrer

entrapped, a forgotten summer's rain
at the fire's greedy touch burst forth
from the crackling pine branch, reeling
in a fog beneath unfamiliar sky.

a hermit thrush sings like smoke
perched with the harvest moon
on the shoulder of a red alder; his notes
grasp the night to stave
this ashen relic, this wound I bound
to the touch that never lingered,
until your absence comes
flooding over the coals.

far from the city's lights,
carousing darkness drinks
the remembered rain,
in drops of wine the shy sweetness
of cranberries after the first frost.

dear one, our hearth was sown beneath this sky,
in this red clay, and shallow rocks
from the creekbed strangled by the cold.
your steady hands cradled the callow flame
like a worried father; these hills are
the weeping mother
of a stillborn wind.