

Resurrection At West Lake

The alien air hisses
articulating objections,
masking threats, though I know
I have walked here before.

Ringed by black palisades
of spruce and this cold black
bowl of water, I understand
again about words, how dormant

mystery can assault like a presence:
"love" when we squirm in it
or "death" when we sense the shape
moving like a windigo in the shadows.

The one crow sky leans on my bowels;
my credulous eyes are admonished
by the witch fingers of nude poplars
forming their voiceless adjurations.

And the social voices are silent too:
crows, chickadees, whiskey jacks
contain their clatter; squirrels
are as mute as pine cones.

Up on the ridge behind me
thin, bone white remnants
of the deepest snowdrifts glow
skeletal under the hackmatacks.

Out of the enigma of evergreens,
these imponderable mounds of granite,
the solitude of one black crow
in a black sky, something surges.

— *Eric Trethewey*