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SQUIRRELS

Richard Emil Braun

In August, hickory; acorns in September.
 Frantic squirrels fumble and glut. They force their cheeks taut.
 Rains of bitten chunks scatter down branches.

Always, several squirrels fall. At least one fat one, twirling,
 face and feet too full, lands on its back. Rain flattens it.
 Next spring, stunted grass will show its outline.

Similarly, during that August-September craze,
 the perfect circular waste where mandrakes have withered
 reveals last year's oak leaves lying intact.