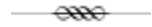


A Day of Thrush Songs

Anita K. Boyle



A light breeze, the cottonwood branches
bristle and groan. This is the first gesture
of the day. When I open a book,

a yellow leaf with seven points appears.
A vine maple, bright yellow, and it means nothing
deeper than that. It's May,

and everything joyous is bathed
in green or absolved with gray.
Dark clouds gather and deepen;

torrents every night.
By day, the aria of dandelion
and buttercup. There's a scraping

at the wall, like branch tips
or tiny claws. The sound is
out of sync with itself,

and, as it turns out,
is only a sparrow on the sill
scratching like a hen. For hours,

the gray Appaloosa
in the roadside paddock
has stood beside the fence

and stared at the neighbor's house.
No one is home. The curtains drawn. A chorus
of thrushes whistles upward.

But there is no preparation
for the fallen one. No one will notice
the thrush beside the road. This is a deletion

of memory. On the hill,
still in sunlight, honeybees
hurry back to the hive.

