

Poem at Sulphur Hollow

by Matthew Vetter

I don't need to tell you,
I have claimed the biggest,
moss-covered rock, to sit

with my son and watch
the black and yellow bird
who brought me here

dart from tree to tree.
What does she know,
I wonder, of the back half

of the Ford I found buried
in the hillside, the lock
of its trunk still shining

among the rust and decay.
All around us, mast from oaks
and maples waits to be

scavenged, stored, peeled.
The skin of the oak nut is scored,
divided like the fruit of an orange

into so many sections.
My son wants to gather
as many as he can, wants

to throw them into this small valley,
wants to add one small sound
to the winter roar of wind

blowing against a thousand
dead dry leaves all at once.
Now there's a low wailing

across the fields, beyond
the tree line that borders
the edge of Sulphur Hollow.

I stand and turn my head.
I want to know the animal
that would cry like that.