

And All the Layered Light

by Charles Semones

In Memoriam: C. F. S. and D. T. S.

Persimmon weather again,
and all the layered light drapes gravestones
and church-steeple, and the bell in the steeple.
It softens the lines of the barn roof and farmhouse,
mourns the last of the garden's yield,
gilds the few keeper pears holding on in the orchard.
Where does it come from—this layered light? Old denizens,
hoary-headed, bonneted beside their fieldstone chimneys,
allow nothing in spite of all their Octobers.
Suddenly, as the day slants toward early dusk,
a single hound gives out its grievous cry, and we know:
this light, this layered light, gives back the hounds of sixty
years ago, gives back a single childhood moment, lets us
glimpse our lives before we used them up
when, frantic about our rounds, we did not have a clue
what we were squandering, like skipping stones across a pond.