

Lesson

by Janice Townley Moore

“ . . . a day I had rued.”

—Robert Frost

Eight days since your death,
the board marker slips the bond of my hand,
flies out of my sight in front of the desk.
Students in the front rows offer a half guffaw.
I focus on the view through the back windows:
the low smoke of clouds, the maples,
their limbs stripped above piles of bronze ashes.
Holding the week's numbness, I move forward
for whatever point one can make on a weary Friday.
I disbelieve: The board marker stands on its slender end,
a trick no one could master by practice,
by the laws of physics,
a lesson beyond the stripped limbs, the ashes.