

Seeds Of Autumn

by Maren O. Mitchell

Tired from years of hauling work packs
up disinterested Cheaha mountains
and staggering down,

you fall asleep still in uniform,
your pants speckled, not with sullen ticks
to firmly pluck and crush,

not with satellite burrs to separate us with pricks,
but with hitch-hiking beggar's-lice:
seeds sandwiched as flat fruit,

early spring green, translucent,
correctly shaped, like the eyes of Matisse women,
veins more intricate than our veins.

They cling to each other, to you, closer
than baby possum to mother possum,
as I wish I could be to you,

with furred hands, feet, whole body,
human Velcro,
to move where you move,

see what you see.
I pry seeds from fabric,
hearing childhood,

when afternoons in woods
brought home
drugging sunburn,

rest of the innocent,
thirst that relished in being relieved,
fingers and tongues evidenced in blackberry blood,

damp pockets weighted with damp jewels
winking *silver, mica, gold,*
red pepper chiggers to season our nights

and beggar's-lice
to be ripped from our socks and sleeves by our mothers
like memories moving away from us

with sounds too small to hear,
except by fingertips patient enough to listen.