

## Waiting Out an Election

Dear Reader, all's hollow and becoming smoke:  
departed branches, my own ringed breath.

The logs are lichened, the chimineas are sparking  
autumnal. I am full of mists and mellow

fruitlessness. So is it harder or easier to believe  
that I am waiting to line up in a gymnasium

and tap multi-colored squares on a screen? or that  
he left and I don't mind? I rather prefer the house

to myself, to rattle its plastered walls. All hollow. As  
bird bones and feather shafts, as the mattress' sagging

valley, still warm, as an airplane's fuselage descending  
into late summer's greenhouse of sweat and sadness.

As someone's leg, sloshing with drink. As that wooden  
book you bought, trying to hide all your money from me.

As all those trunks propping up the canopy under which  
he and I last kissed. Together, we might calculate

the hidden costs of pleasure—the pesticides, the  
permits. Dear Reader, let's talk about trees, how

heavily veined, how susceptible. Beyond bark  
and sapwood, inside heartwood—dark-colored,

dead. Or we might talk about rivers—coursing  
behind the smoke, within the mirrors— talk about

the currents that cast hollow logs upon strange  
shores. Dear Reader, I am willing but dry as kindling,

combustible as a ballot box. Oh, how pleasant  
to forget that not love, but fear roots us.