Squirrels

By Nate Klug

Something blurred, warmed
   in the eye’s corner, like woodsmoke
   becoming tears;
   but when you turned to look

the stoop was still, the pumpkin
   and tacky mum pot wouldn’t talk —
   just a rattle
   at the gutter and a sense

of curtains, somewhere, pulled.
   Five of them later, scarfing the oak’s
   black bole,
   laying a dream of snakes.

Needy and reticent
   at once, these squirrels in charred November
recall, in Virgil,
what it is to feel:

moods, half-moods,
   swarming, then darting loose; obscure
hunches that refuse
   to speak, but still expect

in some flash of luck
   to be revealed. The less you try
   to notice them,
   the more they will know of you.

Source: Poetry (September 2013)