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)