

At the End of the Day

Elizabeth Schultz

Drought-stricken, the forest is silent
this summer, birdless, its talismanic
Indian pipes dry stalks. The moss,
as always, creeps quietly, while
in stillness the fungus spreads
a gaudy efflorescence around
the rotting oak, and the spiders
weave on with relentless serenity.
A scarlet mushroom calls attention
to itself, blinking gently. Patiently
a slug consumes a poisonous amanita.
Languid lances of light softly slice up
the inner shadows, as dust motes
drift haphazardly across them.
A leaf twists downward, crashing
noiselessly on plush moss below.
At the end of the day, a tree will fall,
and it, too, will be soundless.