

Autumn

by [Lynn Domina](#) in the [October 2023](#) issue

Irritated by sweat and exhaustion,  
I heard without seeing  
an owl rush between my raised arm  
and torso, felt the whoosh of flight,  
and then saw its talons  
grasp a field mouse before it disappeared  
into bare branches. Autumn  
arrives so suddenly—you think you have  
weeks left, you think  
time saunters across your horizon  
interminably, you think you'll notice  
the signs before a predator  
grasps the skin between your shoulder blades,  
curls its claws around your spine and takes you  
you'll never know where, but somewhere away.