

Phantom #9

by [Jeff Gundy](#) in the [March 2025](#) issue

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*Americans need to think more about death.*

—Somebody on the internet

1.

Chilly day, just enough sun  
to melt the top inch of grass,

soften the trail enough  
to make it tear away

at a sudden turn.

Passage of deer and rabbits

still inscribed in the moss  
as if I suddenly awoke to them.

2.

So much I miss. What words  
for a thousand shades of brown,

for the way each leaf has found  
to its temporary rest?

3.

Seemed I was walking  
for a long time. Then before me

small leaves on the path  
were like chimes

in the low light  
like spilt coins

like torn-up programs  
from last year's game

like glittering promises  
from the other side.