

Ghost

Now your name's just a guest here, one that cancels
all hellos. Fleshless
you come & go through the mansion

of air. How
will I address you, small
weather? Sometimes your name's

a dress like an iron
bell the years
swing shadows from

longer than *home*. Can you hear
that word peel? I'm going
there now,

carrying the windows
from inside
all the vowels.

Mark Irwin

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Red Feather

This red feather floating down
from the canopy of a tree, the one
we watch all of our lives, then remember
as so many other breathing

things. Caught in a jar, the tadpoles slowly
lost their gills and tails to become
fat, knuckley, green. What

future tense to describe them
then? What grammar
I still look for

dissolving
in a dissolving
past. The owl

blinks its glass eyes
in a tree. Sometimes I think the red feather's
the word *is*. I crack the skull

of an egg and watch the albumen
whiten in a hot
pan. Look, someone's carrying red feathers

into a church where they grow into
a choir of blowing
mouths. My father once said

that all of our lives
we travel between the towns
of *yes* and *no*. I hesitated, smiled,

then walked into a sun-ripe
woods. *Red feather red
feather*, we enter

bodies then place
them into the earth or
flame. April now

and the frogs crawl up
through the mud
to sing.

Mark Irwin

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