

Witnessing by Diane Warner

Tugging on her sleeve and whispering
I tell Nana the neighbor's barn is on fire.
I've just seen the sheltering pines and cedars
explode into flame and orange-gold sparks scatter
from the roofline like children playing tag
or birds in the cornfield frightened by gunfire.

I feel myself become a faint companion
to the fire's bright and pulsing core.

Flowing from branch to branch,
relentlessly spiraling,
something is escaping
from my trusting heart.

Stunned by the splendor,
stunned by the dark heaven,
this impetuous flash of pheasant wings
flying east and west
north and south
leaving nothing
to anchor
the timid
candle
behind
my
eye.

