

To a Fleeting Frosted Gale

by Rachel Townsend

Wind is short-lived, compared with deep roots that linger in the Earth, and often colder.

I breathe you in and breathe you out, make you clean.

At times you are gentle, caress my body with your kisses, feather light.

But then your passion whirls into a Hurricane I cannot climb out of,
dizzying and dropping leaves, dropping flesh,

let them all be carried away and leave me standing

Bare before you, I am yours to see,

Secrets in the lines of my body,

Bedraggled and shivering against your cold hands,

And you seem so pleased that you hold me this way.

Carve initials into my skin and mark me

Yours, because you wrap around me so tightly

that I almost forget that you allowed me to breathe, once.

Then, quick as you came, you retract and leave me in stillness,

Void of your life. No more howling my name into my ears

or seeping into my pores or chipping me away because now,

I stand alone.

And it is a lucky thing that my roots run deep, into the Earth

where it is warm above the fires, and the sun touches me,

Instead of you, and awakens me from my sculpted state so that slowly,

In the Spring, I flourish, grow with a new resolve.

Stronger, greener, clothed in leaves and blossoms.

So, when you come for me again, I attack full force with my limbs,

And though my outer shell drops, I withdraw,

burrow underground to where you cannot reach.

And the initials you carved, that I still bear, are nothing

but the memory of a fleeting frosted gale that failed to uproot me.

