

Four Poems

JANA PRIKRYL

Midwood 10

Nodding their pages at you
at night they turn into
the first, the earliest trees
when everything you didn't know was darkness in the woods
and now it looks
like darkness was the form
of knowledge,
you can't unsee it again

Midwood 11

That summer when the leaves were at their fluffiest
I issued daily memos on what you mean
the leaves burned neon and suffered the brutish tassels
of the squirrels, wagging sectors of the tree with no notice
as if there were a soul inside scratching itself
it was during just that season
my task to refuse all symbols
to read you clearly, install you across from this

Midwood 18

A day so overcast
 the sparrows the toy ambassadors of nature
 are staying in their crofts their secret hideaways
 the ravine is quiet the maples with their male-pattern baldness
 fluttering blond leaves at midlevel, naked candelabras on top
 where are the sparrows my morning confidants
 what does this shadowless lighting this dusky overture tell them
 the line of every twig every fire escape achieves prominence
 those letters you sent me in childhood folded in a box a whole day's
 drive away

Midwood 22

One thing I'll say about trees
 they never object
 to getting carried away
 I don't mean uprooted, I mean swept
 sideways while also forth toward a certain place in the sky
 the sun may know about
 what does the sun know
 I don't mean the constant burning, rather
 unfortunate position, no surrender