Grieving for Hopkins

Richard Katrovas
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Margaret, behind you is someone whose heart churns slowly as decay. Eve in “grieving” and “unleaving” is his joke with God, whom he suffers to accommodate like slow burning of vegetation into earth in autumn. His presumption as to what has caused your sadness I shall not presume to understand; though I must think that any child, witness to such pageantry as red and golden leaves and joyful songs of harvest, would not pause to contemplate harbingers of death.

I think you are hunting mushrooms, and your older brother has filched your wicker basket. Pressing hands over a giggle, he’s hiding in a bush. When he scrambles from his gnarl of switches to give you back what’s yours, he points behind you, yelling, “Sister, look, a man!”

You turn, and that man turns. Margaret, his soul is ready for the next breeze to send it fluttering toward earthly fires, where a wounded god is healing in your eyes.