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Iowa City Sestina

Nell Regan

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IOWA CITY SESTINA

This town is stitched by river—that finds and winds its way through trees whose leaves curl yellow—and every poem is found to contain it, them, and cicada call. Perhaps they too stand for longing forded by an imagined Atlantic bridge.

Outside my window the bridge of green, wrought iron spans the river asks what is there to miss? It will not be long love, till you find me under this tree straining to describe the cicada song that is shot though this poem.

Each avenue of the city, a walking poem of considered views that yield to bridges over which the chatter and clatter of cicada curls and pulls time forward in a rivering flow while leaf considers tree and the blue reflection of sky is longing for river just as water is longing for color much as word yearns for poem or its echo in a lover’s ear. The tree stands alone, says desire less, bridge with what you have here and the river will carry to you all the cicada pulse and call of a continent. Wish cicada tymbal on the banks of all Iowas along the Mississippi as it rivers out through prairie, plain, and poem.
The pitched sough of the train that bridges
the night, freights stories of cornfield, of oak tree
to the city’s gridded morning where trees
anoint the grass with shade, students read, cicada conversations fade. Later, stepping to the bridge
the Capitol dome will throw its gold reflection, elongating the reach of a September dusk where a poem or thought might constellate. Deep in the river
open-mouthed carp gape up at trees, long branches pooling on its ceiling while cicada-poem clicks, calls forth a silent bridge to span the river.