

Grieving for Hopkins · *Richard Katrovas*

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 burn-  
ing 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 flut-  
tering toward earthly fires,  
where a wounded god is healing in your eyes.