

self-criticism · *Monica Raymond*

it was a mistake to pretend that
we were on intimate terms
with wildlife

and fling words
like scarlet tanager
into our poems

this was at best a pretense
at worst a deception
we got them from books

and the names
of the constellations
spattered and starry

do you think poets
see all that differently
from you really

no headlights
blunt the night sky
in the same way I assure you

I can tell you
a pigeon a squirrel
a tree in its nest of concrete

but the rest is technical vocabulary
typefaces machines
with their intricate molded parts

there are experts
even for this leaf
fraying the edge of the concrete

remedy probably
for some disease
we have forgotten the name of