

It's just that—bad cello!—
the rondo? I like it, like to play it twice because
no words! Because *I do it*
so badly! Delicious part
going minor, right
down the hole, neither-what I thought-nor-
what I dreamt. Dark in there. Strange.

LEAVES IN FALL

They come down, straight down or crooked,
fast or drunken. Wind might do it,
might call the cruel trick but they're
starving anyway, light's sugar
nothing so sweet now,
and then this mysterious business
of turning a drastic color. I rake.
I rake the damn sad things
all morning, past lunch.
What was I thinking?

That certain things
have to be done. That the earth
orbits slowly. That beauty gives up
its beauty. Huge piles of it—
maple's yellow, the elm's ghost gray,
hackberry with its sulfurous boils
curled tight. Maybe someone else
said this: the sky is a pearl, darkening.
Or this: it's bad milk, not a cloud
against anything.

So I rake
and drag it all on a tarp to the curb, the heavy
scrape scrape of it past birdbath

The dead
lean forward.

lean forward.