

July 2014

The First Fall

Ayla Batton

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/laureate>



Part of the Poetry Commons

Recommended Citation

Batton, Ayla (2014) "The First Fall," *The Laureate*: Vol. 9 , Article 41.
Available at: <https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/laureate/vol9/iss1/41>

This Poetry is brought to you for free and open access by the Lee Honors College at ScholarWorks at WMU. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Laureate by an authorized editor of ScholarWorks at WMU. For more information, please contact wmu-scholarworks@wmich.edu.

The First Fall

In the evening,
we stood on corners with an upturned umbrella,
fingers reaching, mouths watering wakefully,
smelling the moment before the sun is overtaken
by clouds. The first fall it rained and rained
until even the streets were sleeping
underwater. My Newfoundland wet pawed
through sidewalks and slick grass
around our valley home. He pushed
the ambivalent oak with plaintive songs
until the weighted branches hung low
over the sunken streets full of empty water
and leaves and white sticks knocked from hands.

The trees are heavy in the fall with Japanese beetles
and sorrow. The abandoned thoughts
of the valley float full and opaque over
the silent, hungry water like rice paper lanterns
waiting to be swallowed, then remembered.

I always know when we two are close to home
because all the streets are downhill.
Sometimes my yoked dog pulls me
over broken acorns and glass and rain water
and I let the little moons lift from the branches
to follow me home.

— Ayla Batton