

Revenant

You have put yourself in the story
using words that have wandered away from their origin.
The Firebird Suite plays. A flame is lit.
You think of order, of sequence.
First, read “Snow” by Margaret Avison.
Second, take a moment, let the wind fill you.
Third, read the opening poem in a collection:
It is an umbrella.
All umbrellas harbour ghosts. Open one and see.
For umbrellas, life is open or closed, rain or not rain.
An eagle tries out a secret handshake it learned
from witnessing a black bear raise her young.
And you know in your heart that a medley
is a musical term, not a collection of vegetables.
And you know that fusion is a process inside a star,
not the mixing of rock and jazz.
You erase yourself from the story.
You are in the poet’s boneyard.
Listen to Stravinski. A flame is extinguished.
You see your life spread out on the floor,
images projected from underneath
like an opening ceremony, a closing ceremony.
Shaking off your revenant’s skin,
you are a firebird, an open umbrella, an elder black bear.
Finally, you are a young black bear
learning the ways of the world.