

The words wrote me into the day

'Pita'

Just past the picture

Window

A chickadee pecks

At last years sunflower hulls

Each tree stands above

It's roots

An insistent wind

Tickles each branch, summons the past

We stacked the logs, a house

Rooted itself

A sunny day came

The notched corner called me

Like a barber I started

The chain

Saw and began

To trim the random lengths.

Amidst the smoke and smell

A roaring

Not the vibrating engine

But dad, like a papa bear separated from its cubs

He tore the saw from my hands

A soaring

As he flung it, like a black and yellow bumble bee it buzzed

And spittle arced from his lips, a rainbow of rain.

Though standing it seemed I curled
At his feet
Playing dead while the storm raged
Overhead, until I saw him leap to the saw

Still idling, its silver chain
Quite still.
Then he flung it at my head.
Awakened I stepped aside, opened

Like a door on well-oiled hinges
Through which
The saw flew, landing on the rough sawn porch.
Bouncing toward the window, still idling, still.

Ours eyes locked, my dad and I.
Amazement
Rose like sap from my feet to my head.
Instead of running I locked and stood closed.

A drumbeat pounded in my ears
Incessant
In the doorway of my brain.
Then dad turned and strode away.

The saw kept idling before the picture window
Of the cabin
I saw time through this picture window
Ghostlike and gaunt.

Ghostlike I went to the saw
And flicked
The switch off. Silence and silent darkness
Crawled into my heart...slept there ever since.

The determined tapping of the chickadee
Beak, last
Years sunflower hulls arcing up
Outside this picture window.

The insistent wind blows the past
Around
The corner of this house
Where it drops to the ground and plays dead.