

## SHE LEFT WITH SUMMER

---

*Shane Cashman*

Apple soaked clouds coast slow below the late pale blue sky,  
Low enough to wave your hand through,  
And select from like an orchard.

The forest shakes in the fresh fall wind spilling over mountains,  
And you try to capture it like the last firefly of summer  
Or  
Hold on to it like a farewell kiss.

Cattails sway at the edge of the woods,  
Inviting you in,  
And you think about what you'd be for Halloween.  
All the things you were.

Sit by the unused pool  
Filling with leaves,  
Beside the oak  
As it turns to gold.

Build bonfires  
Beneath the stars,  
Watching them burn at length in distances that sink our hearts,  
Staring mystified, like boys waiting for a pop-fly to come down in the  
field.

Share your last cigarette with the one person who needs it most besides  
you.  
The glowing cherry handled like a controlled comet, as the porch smoke  
Chimneys into the invisible  
And joins the nomad night,  
Claimed with the rest of the light,

While bugs sing their love songs from treetops,  
And from the forgotten swamps of your youth  
That you haven't been to  
Since middle school when someone carved your initials  
In the birch tree that still bows respectful over the water.

At dusk now we hide our heads in hoods like helmets  
Cut through cemeteries  
Drink all night  
Sing insane in the car with the windows down  
No matter how old we get,  
That endless sensation of doing underage-everything never disappears  
When this reaper air  
Consumes us.

Soon these days become abbreviated in heightened tempos,  
And the tangerine-sun will temporarily capsize in the late pale blue  
sky,  
Keeping her warmth for herself.