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North Woods Renga

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Dark shadow crosses path,
fleeting before I look up,
either buzzard or hawk

searching, stalking, on the wind
Who is it that he hunts for?

mammals scurrying below
safe from buzzard, prey to hawk
scavenges wait their turn

an example of nature's cycle
all throughout the woods

Hawks eat mice eat plants eat sun
A circle continues, like the buzzards
hunting for prey

Buzzards don't actually buzz,
shouldn't that name be for bees?

Circling high above us
An omen for rot and doom
A change of tempo

Not just rot but also rebirth
Ecosystem's energy

Turning farms into
solar farms, turning forests
into solar farms

Innovations and
restorations all buzz

Larval fuzz, soft farms
a straight line coils in shade
ferns blanket this place

Sharp green briar grows,
keeps me on the path once known

In the pool, lives wiggle
Making alphabetic
Shapes against the dark mud

Telling a story written
In the song of frog and bird

The earth is damp
The ground is dry and warmed
by sunlight and friends

Sunlight waking up all
types of fair-weather friends

From those that squirm
To those that furl and unfurl, just like
a fiddle leaf fern

A field of spirals spread out
hypnotizing all creatures

Most of all us
creatures of art and interest
How it mesmerizes

Curiosity woven
Into the threads of our being

Swirling fog and dust
Atop a pool of spring
The Frog's kin appears

Branches dance above water

waiting for their canopy to unfold

Sweet scent of blooming
as the leaves grow, the pond shrinks
the frogs might be moving.

Who is dancing beneath the depths,
On the darker, wetter stage?

Legs like a dancer,
They first grow into themselves.
Tadpoles have to learn.

Each “step” a new journey
Our evolution, a beautiful thing

New growth and more joy
A gathering of close friends
Those we used to know

Each tadpole a squishy friend
Each beetle, each tan spider

I wander alone,
New friends at each encounter,
who knew they could speak.

leaves rustle,
ground bustling with sounds,
trees bare

wind moves through the bare limbs
like a paintbrush with no water

The changing colors
A tapestry of nature
Against angry gusts

A deeper rumbling from
Far away; birds call in chorus

“Who are they calling?”
“And for what?” sometimes I wish
I could understand.

Bird songs echo in my head
For days and weeks and years on end

Sound moves through the woods,
from birds and bugs and blowing leaves.
It is like music.

A cacophony of noise
A piercing silence inside

Man’s words lost in time
Buried by the natural world
A lovely fossil

Carved into crusted gravestones
Field recording qr codes

Sun is warming
rustling leaves, snake appears,
missed a hand outstretched.

She counts her fingers and her hands
And in her final numbers

I ain’t got no limbs
But that doesn’t bother me.
I smell with my tongue!

A tasty morsel appears
A ground treat for me indeed!

A happy wiggle
One perfectly turned strike
Eating good tonight

Over twenty thousand steps
Ready for supper and sleep

I finally lay,
spring peepers ringing,
sleep calls my name

all day spent listening to birds
not knowing what they discuss

Of My death, perhaps
I look to be a dinner?
No, they are too small.

Nibbles, chomps, and lunging bites
All who wander know this hunger

She gently dances
the moon drunken goddess
shining like the stars

I'm dressed in my finest clothes
Waiting for her to notice

Oblivious,
brighter than ever she,
flourishes

The moon is lit by distant
Light, old heat against the dark

Pockmarks and craters
Not hidden, for all to see
A glowing smile

Fading from the fullest phase
In our minds, but not yet our sky

it seems eternal
and I hope it could be

calming, present light

that washes down on us
bathing us in its light.

Shadows grow in light.
They provide contrast for us,
in sight and in soul.

A perfect balance of passion
my soul enshrined by her form

Passing the paper
The trees find a new purpose
Things like poetry

Recycling words like refuse
Our real phoenix is reborn

A verbal garden
scattered with flower-like phrases
budding ideas forming

Perhaps a vernal pond can help
Dump words in for frogs to use.

Frogs sings,
Birds chirp while I,
run out of words

The bird song fills the afternoon
maybe they are out of ideas.

A new verse shines through
The repeated mimicry
Of a thousand voices

Animals call out in chorus
No stage fright—good for them.

maybe I can learn
a thing (or two) from their
boldness in song!

Perhaps this is a mockingbird's job:
to find new purpose in song

Picking up spiders
From beneath my heart's strings
I am ensnared again

Intricate, delicate web
threads can break and threads can also grow

webbed collection
mostly in white, but a thread,
of deep red, sticks out

Black widow misunderstood,
wears its heart on its sleeve

In the spider's web
we understand the thread, everything
is connected to everything.

Woven together careful
Yet ready to trap her prey

Dancing along threads
sticky with sharp strategy
honed through centuries

misunderstood through centuries.
hiding, attempting to coexist.

But she cannot hide
with her bright red markings,
Though she doesn't try.

The webs she builds catch her food,

and the beauty of design

In the woods
I hear an echoed squawking,
coming from the pond.

A cluster of squishy orbs,
Soon there will be amphibians!

Among them is life
A chance for greater joy
For all to love frogs

A relentless choir of song
The forest dances with the beat

Chirping and knocking
But also honking and trucks.
Noise-canceling pine needles

crunchy leaves cancel my thoughts,
let the frogs sing their song

The bell tower rings out
interrupting the wind
another hour come and gone

Only a short time remains
Until this song of life ends

All of our poems
are about frogs and forest life
but mostly about frogs

Sweet cardinals, competing
to also have their voices heard.

Baby geese come from
Eggs, like salamanders and frogs
and breakfast

Species similarities,
pondering what else we share.

The tree of life is
our unifying structure:
it continues branching

If branches keep on branching,
are we back at the beginning?

A new beginning?
The beginning of the end?
Who cares, live your life

Living life without any fear
Opens up the soul's windows

Each spring, my mom cleans,
opening all the windows
Burning pine candles

Just like clockwork,
Everything cycles and is anew

In the dirt beneath us
the trees are all passing notes
across the mycorrhiza

Of how to live, and to breathe
Maybe this is one of them.