

Sixteen Lines, Autumn 2010

In past autumns, I saw the world differently.

Swans looked graceful
because their bodies were white.

Crows were soothsayers – black
wings, black cries.

In those autumns, death was a small affair.
One leaf fell.
Another.

This autumn, death gets even smaller.

Leaves tilted by wind, into ashes of the earth.
Swans grow fatter,
dropping two or three feathers
into water.
Crows, mouthing air in bare elder trees.

Look: a long sundown.

No more black and white.