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## Matrimonial

Like the cedar waxwings passing sweet meat  
to one another in the choke cherry, their bodies  
ghosted brown as if they might dissolve

in the yellow air, or are dissolving now.  
Or the purpling blushed arrival of the male house finch  
on the long arm of the feeder, until she — plain,

brown, thin — alights. They sit as a pair for only  
the time it takes to settle her wings, and then he's off.  
All day, light makes shadows out of loveliness.

\* \* \*

In the silver birch, a hundred greens shudder, dither  
in the risen wind against savage blue.  
All the afternoons, nights, lost

trying to recover what was lost long before:  
vireo in the high black locust. Wings  
of the robin we once thought plain,

close up now translucent, polychrome,  
crashed from our glass, the small, hollow bones,  
and the eye's stunned, blind gaze.

Jillian Barnet



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## Self Portrait as a Roman Ruin

A column hopeful  
of space, inclusion, still Ionic—

two opposed volutes like wishes,  
or whorled gastropod shells from a watery far away . . .

I should have been—was I part of—  
a peristyle? I hardly remember the entablature,

the frieze, something with boys, I think,  
women pouring water. There must have been

order. Who could tell  
in this stubbly field where mostly I hold up

nothing, made singular,  
glorified by air.

Jillian Barnet

Jillian Barnet's poetry has appeared in *Nimrod*, *Karamu*, *Bellingham Review*, and elsewhere. She has written book reviews for *Calyx* and *Café Review*. Jillian works as a technical writer for business and industry and as a professor of creative and business writing at Chatham College. She received her MFA from Vermont College.