

LESLIE ELIZABETH ADAMS

Winter: Plane and Violin

Dry branches rasp a high violin whine,
a keening lean and hungry as the cat that spins
the thin lines of its cries through the morning.
Sun fires the tops of trees into a web of flames
I would cup my hands around
if I could reach the branch crests.
Each flat surface—the planar ground unwound
from the trees' femoral trunks, the dry backs
of my hands—collects light like ice,
and from the long-fingered branches
frost scripts its hard name against every window.
Overhead the smoke of the day's first planes
chars pale scars. All the ground bone-brittle,
prone to shatter, birds startling in short bleats
of flight, breaking fragmented from undergrowth
and right now I would rise and walk
without stopping toward the first voice I heard.