

KATHY ENGEL

How the Light Gets In

for Alicia Ostriker (after Leonard Cohen)

Say the memory of tree in the body stops
the split, but the hand's stuck in its clench-

shape, having held the axe handle, blade
inside the tree. Say it was beech. Say it was

too late for fleshy bark. Say a fine yellow
filters through between hand and wood,

enough to read this line or plant the next tree—
ginko, cedar—light enough to forgive.