

Black Locusts

I'm thinking of old black locust trees,
wood hard as steel,
alien and deathlike in winter
when icy roads send reckless teenagers
driving their cars into the bark.
Those trees point to the cold moon
like the fingers of old angry men
in private battles with unstoppable pain.

In spring – black trees bloom into white,
a million corsages for the wind,
inside each blossom,
small gifts of seeds for migration's appetite.
In summer, the deep rutted hide of the black locust
is a highway
for earth-bound insects to storm the heavens.

The worth of such trees depends on your age.
I'm the thirteen year old boy in the second story window,
breathing the perfume of your flowers,
counting the dancers in the ballet of oval leaves
in the sunset
until I find the courage
to call her on the phone
and speak the language
rooted in my heart.