
POETRY | FALL 2013

Beneath a Sycamore: Autism Revisited

By Woods Nash

Splashing in the shallows, he found a rock,
a rostrum, and mounted it, knowing not

what to make of the butterfly's waving,
its brushing in silence his dripping brow.

Regardless, his autism sought balance—
to realize the miraculous weight

of feet free and unjoined from the water.
Tottering on that rock invisible,

for him all things roared. And stretching above,
a sycamore—its leaves lovely, palmate,

dangling spheres of fruit ornamental—
was offering every possible world.

Woods Nash is a lecturer in philosophy at the University of Tennessee, where he teaches bioethics and other courses in applied ethics. His research is in the medical humanities, and he has published articles on Walker Percy and Cormac McCarthy. His poems have appeared in *Journal of Medical Humanities*, *Louisville Review*, *Heartland Review*, *Journal of Progressive Human Services*, and others. His poem, "Close to the Flowers: Notes from a Tanzanian Orphanage" also appeared in the Fall 2013 *Intima*.

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