

Creep of Creativity

not a cloistering figure or echo
of shadow, linger of breath. Creep

as in tentative step, measured
slide, delicate crawl. The inching

bristle of painter's brush or vine-
cling of sapling, reaching the light

like light-bulb ideas of a poet chanting
found words during a walk

before the phrases fade, letter
by letter, aphasia to the dawn.

It's the shifting, stirring water
ballet of pulp the papermaker wands

in the vat of foraged fiber: garlic,
abaca, lavender threads of cotton.

It's the bowerbird stick-building
his nest, twig by twig, stringing

fluorescent strands of llama
coat yarn to woo, to impress.

It's the gardener, full-booted
in aisles of seeds, pruning

bolts, finger-tipping all
sunflower volunteers, nodding

a hello and eyebrow warning
to the neighboring groundhog.

It's the monarch caterpillar
feasting on milkweed, legging

to a notch to one-end hammock
into chrysalis, into wings.

It's the turkeys in far-stretch
of meadow pecking blueberries

then ticks, blueberries then ticks,
before the hay-baler tractors

all those golden stems, gathers them
into rectangles, so human in design.

It's the process, the sound and silence
of focus, of practice, imagination:

the click and cluck or brush
and swipe, the peep and hum, whir

and till, slowly and in bits, in layers,
in strokes or letters in lines.

It's work, quiet but certain, full
of knowing, of mystery.

It's the creep of creativity—
the whisper of nature's divine.

—Michelle Menting, Literary Artist / Poet-in-Residence, August 2019