

## Respite

Last night in the rainstorm I watched  
a porcupine amble through the clover,  
up to the base of the apple tree where  
the birdfeeder swayed with each sheet  
of gusted wet. He wobbled and steadied,  
wobbled and steadied, as porcupines do.  
Both feet smack-planted on one side  
while the other side lifted, then planted,  
lifted, then planted again. Oh, but he moved  
in full refreshment, in full blossom of midnight  
delight, this giddy, June-drenched rodent.  
And I just wanted to share that. That dappled  
rain moment of peace blooming outside. One  
animal watching another. Both in blithesome joy.

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