

John C. Morrison

New Patch of Sky

Crows caw confused, the air
out of place. Light stands
stunned inside the drip line
that belonged to the spruce.

Blue from trunk to tip,
it crowded sewer pipe, scraped
eaves in every jagged wind.
I gave it a year to stunt,

stall at chimney height
and when in spring it flaunted
a fresh swarm of swollen,
soft buds, I hired Fred

in torn and stained pink jeans
to chainsaw and haul all
even memory away
with the squirrel nest tucked

in the branches: knotted ball
of duff and bark strands,
rotted strips of red rag
and green jute twine.

Home from school my youngest,
silent at the stump,
hands deep-rooted in pockets,
counts rings back to blur

around his birthday.
I knew he'd side with the spruce,
be too angry to see
the new patch of sky.