

Totentanz

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Outside the wind tears
still-green leaves from their branches
pulling them up and off
like a corn shucker
ripping husk from kernels.

The leaves, whisked into the wet,
chilled air,
enter a frenzied procession—
a mad swirl of twigs,
rotting bark, and
wrappers lifted from the gutter.

Through the window,
I watch this cruel, choreographed
dance of debris,
the tango of dead and not-dead
that spells the end of summer.

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