

Gathering Chanterelles in a Forest near Ossiach

Two paces, or four steps, stop.
Kneel, tilt head, look longways—
rusted gold, orange, white dream
of the woods—cut (leave the first one)
carry on with feet shuffling
pine duff and forest dust
sun illuminating dappled and fringed
roofs of the mushrooms, filtered beams
through the trees, slant light laying
an apricot blanket over Lake Ossiach

where later we sit
with a sack full of chanterelles
waiting for the restaurant owner
to approve our loot, and after
we enjoy the art of them cooked down
in the chef's love of butter and heavy cream
ladled upon warm schnitzel, ground salt
fresh parsley and a bottle of Chianti—
grapes plucked from their gnarled vines
with the same kind of delicate mind
and firm hands that tugged up
the fully blossomed, heavenly spent.

—Z. G. Tomaszewski

