

Donna Baier Stein

BETWEEN SEASONS

You think of the moment
between the asking and the answer.
The spasm of celebration
when you are looking
out the window before the fall:

Blond, maybe seven or eight,
the boy and his sneakers
test the outer ledge of the bridge.
Three friends look on from the sidewalk.
Below, a creek shrinks to a thin line,
Near the boy's head
branches ache to cradle him.
His friends wear giddy smiles,
tiny perfect images of the sun
caught in each eye.
Further on, the creek
becomes a river,
frozen silver and radiant
with sun-tossed booty.

Here, now, before the significant fall,
the tree on the bank
stands black, bare and wary.