

Cadenza

Some pay to see
a piano set on fire,
maple and mahogany,
fir and spruce,
all burning brightly.
After one week,
even ivory cremates.

I watch the old red oak—
beyond my front lawn
near the gravel road,
the tree that was a gift
from my uncle,
who lived to be ninety—
ignite every fall.

Patch after patch
becomes a swirl of red,
orange and yellow,
until one day
the entire tree stands
ablaze with beauty
and then barren.



