**Sapped by Anne Marie Connolly**

She caught a glimpse of tree,

 a quick swish passing by

 on a busy train at eight a.m.

 enough to waken early sky

 make you think that she might be

 rushing to work instead of you

 pollarded to keep her trim

 so the boss with secateur eyes

 will look with favour on all she does

 rooted on platforms or broad-fitting flats

 to stand all day in, smile at colleagues

 so constrained and tortured

 they are petrified to grow

 colleagues who avoid forests and hills

 because they interfere with signals

 to machines that whisper

 not the way wind whispers, skirls

 the small piping reeds that lie

 in the elbow of the trees’ roots

 giving each day its grace-notes

 but rather in the way that dust sighs

 in an empty room filtering

 the minutes of your life

 owning the minutes of your life

 more than you do, more than you ever

 wanted your life to be owned

 by anyone else but you

 just as sleep tosses the nightmare’s

 tail and makes you curl into a foetal coil,

 think of what the morning will not bring

 even if you dream the possibility

 of a day blown free of the machines’

 rodent sound, only a breath above silence.