**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.