

## Leaves

The girl digs and circles  
until she is an egg, unhatched.  
Her nest stands high.

Through the rim of leaves  
she sees sharp autumn sky.  
Lies there,

nearly forgets until  
her father's admonishment  
returns, a knife through her dream:

Some people, he says, drive  
straight through  
leaves on the roadside.

Some people, he says,  
may never see you at all.  
She unfolds, newly hatched

from the nest grown hazardous,  
stumbles away  
dreaming of smallness.

That bright afternoon her father dashes  
to rescue everyone,  
even the mother, though unsure

of the cleanliness of her hand.  
He brings her to the safety of his nest,  
builds a delicate world around her.

Meanwhile, the girl finds no river nearby,  
settles on a pool of violets  
not nearly as soft as they appear.

She lies down under a rim of purple  
momentarily pleased  
but for the purple in other places.

Her father piles the leaves  
in the yard, not the street,  
and leaves them there.

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